

CURRENTS OF THOUGHT IN THE EUROPEAN LITERATURE

By

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Introduction

A brief survey of the currents of thoughts and beliefs that have flowed through the European mind since the beginning of the European civilisation.

The following currents may be noted :—

(1). *The Hellenisation of Europe.*

The Hellenic race or the Greeks are considered as the founders of European culture and civilisation. They were the founders of philosophy, science, art and culture. Even now they are considered as the model in writing poetry, drama, epic, lyric or prose. Matthew Arnold, one of the greatest critics of the nineteenth century, considers the Hellenic ideals in literature as models and he regrets that English culture did not follow the principles of Hellenisation more sincerely and earnestly but diverted itself into the Hebraic channel that has retarded the progress and advancement of the English intellect: Libraries of books have been written by modern European scholars about the influence of the Greeks on the national cultures of Europe. Any well-written history of Greece will be helpful to the student to enable him to understand the main outlines of this influence. The Greeks created perfect beauty in their poetry and other arts and they have taught philosophy and science also. In Politics also their lessons have been valuable for the political advancement of

Europe. They were the defenders of European civilisation against the barbaric invasion of Persia. Hellenic influence has been a great factor in the political making of Europe. The ethical teaching of Socrates has been at the basis of the freedom of the individual and it is this free individuality, both of men and women, that has made Europe politically free, adventurous, rich prosperous and self-reliant. Every man's kingship, we may say, has been established by this spirit of the freedom of the individual.

European imagination has been largely developed by the myths and legends of Greece. The student need only remember what Keats, Tennyson, Shelley and others among the nineteenth century poets have owed to the myths and stories of the Greek pantheon. This influence of the Greek myths was far greater on the writers of the age of Elizabeth and of the succeeding centuries *i.e.*, the seventeenth and eighteenth. The beautiful images of the Greek gods and goddesses and heroes have fascinated the poets of the modern time and the heroes of the myths as well as of history are held even now in high esteem. Alexander of history has been a great theme with poets, specially in France. Achilles and Hector, as depicted by Homer; are typical heroes for poets. Just as the heroes of the *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharata* are figures which no Hindu imagination can surpass, so the Hellenic heroes are the loftiest that a European poet can conceive.

(2) The next factor in the making of Europe was the *Romanisation* of the countries round the Mediterranean Sea under the Roman emperors, beginning from the first century B.C. to the fifth century A.D. The laws, language, literature, politics, manners, etc. of the Romans were followed everywhere from the Atlantic ocean to the river Euphrates and from the Sahara Desert in Africa to the river Danube.

This Romanisation has continued down to the present time and half Europe (*i.e.*, the Catholics) even now obey the pope of Rome in matters religious and pay homage to him. Latin has contributed more than seventy per cent of words to the formation of all the national languages of England, France, Spain, Italy and Germany. The Catholics use the Latin Bible in their worship and all learned people know this language of imperial Rome. The position of the Latin tongue in Europe may be compared with that of Sanskrit in Hindu India. Scholars knowing Latin may easily learn the vernaculars of England, France, and other countries and master their literatures also. Latin grammar was formed in imitation of the Greek grammar and the grammars of the modern languages have been written after the Latin Grammar.

All European systems of laws are based on the laws of the Romans and the political institutions of modern Europe have been developed after the political models supplied by Greece and Rome. Study of the histories of Greece and

Rome will convince and impress the enquiring student. These points need not be dwelt upon at length in this brief survey.

The myths of the Romans also have appealed to the imagination of European poets and they have written their poetry making Jupiter, Vulcan, Castor and Pollux, etc., the images of beauty, power and greatness. Most of the allusions in studying English poetry are to be elucidated by pointing out their origin in Greece and Rome. The religion of modern Europe is of Roman origin. Roman Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion of the Empire. The impress of Roman imperialism is deeply stamped on the Christian church.

(3) *The Christianisation of Europe* has been perhaps even a more important factor than either her Hellenisation or Romanisation. Neither the Greeks nor the Romans, both races being worshippers of many gods and goodesses, and having no assured faith in a future state of existence, could displace the mythologies of the races conquered by them, either politically or intellectually. It is monotheism alone which has exerted a conquering influence. Hence both Christianity and Islam have been proselytising religions. Polytheistic religion cannot have that strength which is necessary for making converts.

Europe has improved, ethically and spiritually, by the theism of Christ. Human life being

short, people require a hope for the future and Christianity gave a definite scheme of salvation of the immortal part of man. Human life has little meaning apart from this hope of immortality. The scientific or the historical hope of man's progress and advancement in civilisation cannot satisfy the human soul. Scientific or political progress may add to the comforts of the body, but man is essentially a spirit and a spiritual being. He is not a mere animal. Hence the ideal of immortality and salvation provided by Christ's teachings has made converts of whole Europe, though now-a-days many enlightened people seem to have outgrown the Christian plan of salvation. If we subtract the contributions made by Christianity from the truths taught by modern European poets, thinkers and philosophers, very little worth the serious attention will be left as remainder, though M. Arnold may regret the predominance of the Hebraic element in the making of the modern man. The legends and stories of the old and the new Testaments furnish another great source of images of beauty, goodness, and greatness on which European imagination has been fed and nourished. The mysteries and miracles performed by Jesus and the saints make up a large part of the literatures of Europe. How they have contributed to the making of the modern drama is well-known. These, again, have been added to by the angels, devils and fairies, and these are the supernatural elements of the European literature. Then the

supernatural factor of the European literature has largely come from Christianity.

The organisation of the Christian church was moulded after the imperial model of Rome and was called the oecumenical or the universal church, as it controlled all the European countries. Its organisation and the hierarchical gradation in ranks of the priests with the Pope at the head have moulded the European nations politically. In almost all the countries centralised governments with kings at the head were developed. The Pope controlled these monarchs and often made and un-made them. The stamp of the Roman imperialism was thus firmly fixed. The state machinery controlled religion among the ancient Greeks and the Romans and the same arrangement continued during the Christian centuries. So that the church and the state became moulded under the same machinery and thus the church and the state became each other's supporters and often rivals to each other. The divine right of the king was preached along with the divine right of the Pope and his clerics. The King claimed to be appointed by God, being the Lord's annointed, just as the Pope claimed to be a God-appointed guardian for the care of the soul of man. The claim of the Pope was superior to that of the King. Hence the religion of the church was a sort of politics, and thence followed the persecution of heretics and schismatics. Religious persecution assumed a terrible form under the Spanish Inquisition and the

burning of heretics was resorted to as the shedding of blood was to be avoided by the priests.

When the authority of the church was thus politically confirmed, it crushed all freedom of thinking. The Pope became an infallible authority. The *Gurus* in our country also have asserted infallibility, but as there were many *Gurus* here, persecution was not resorted to. There was a freedom enjoyed by people here since the foundation of Hindu culture in pre-Rigvedic days. But Christianity laid exclusive claim on the monopoly of truth and condemned all other religions as false. This is a legacy of Judaism. The Jews claimed their own religion as the only true one and its offsprings Christianity and Islam similarly have claimed an exclusiveness, though neither Mahomet nor Jesus seems to have claimed any such monopoly originally. The higher thinking of all modern savants, philosophers and scientists must be ascribed to the mental greatness that Europe has attained under the influence of Christian church since the fifth century, A. D. Human intellect and imaginations cannot develop properly without a faith in the unseen. Just as the old myths of the Gods had helped the imagination, similarly the purer theology of Judaism and Christianity has contributed to the making of Kant, Hegel, and other great thinkers, though they may not be called orthodox Christians. Could there be the great poet Dante and others, such as, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, unless their

ancestors had been Christians with an assured faith in a future state of existence? Evolution and progress of the human intellect is not possible, if men only deal with and think upon limited and measurable things. Somehow we must be in tune with the Infinite, if we wish to develop our imagination and other intellectual faculties.

(4) The next step we may name as *Orientalisation*, when the crusaders came in contact with the warriors of the east. This contact between the east and the west redounded to the advancement and refinement of the west. From the contact with the Sarasenic conquerors of Spain, Sicily and northern Africa, an enlightening impact took place, so that Europe began again to study the scientific Chemistry (Arabic Alchemy), Mathematics, etc. The Arab conquerors of Europe introduced the Decimal System from the east, where they had learned it. This intellectual awakening of Europe of the thirteenth century has been called an early Renaissance. Roger Bacon was a scientist of this early period. But the Christian church stood in the way of this enlightening movement and imprisoned Roger Bacon, and condemned his books as heretical. The church disliked the rationalisation of the people. But this contact with the Arabs has left its stamp on the chivalry and woman-worship of the west.

The Italian sonnets of Petrarch were inspired by a species of love-poetry of the Arabs and the eroticism of the east has influenced the love

lyrics of the west, though the level of love has remained there human and rarely has risen to the level of religion. The German mystics, however, have raised it to the divine level, being influenced by the Vedantic teachings of the Suphies and eastern mystics. Christian female saints have purified human love to a divine level.

(5) The *moralisation* of Europe by Christianity.

The Mediaeval Church rendered eminent service to the advancement of European faith, morality and intellect, yet it became corrupted and invited attack both from the laity as well as from the clergy. The two orders of monks, the Dominicans and the Franciscans like our Buddhists did excellent philanthropic work. The Franciscans, disciples of St. Francis of Italy, spread throughout Europe and worked among the poor and did much to improve their lot in the 12th and 13th centuries. The followers of St. Dominic of Spain also worked on the same lines among the upper orders and rendered excellent service by improving people's faith and intellectual pursuits. But the celibacy of the monks gradually led into corruption and hence protests rose against them. Thus there was an early Reformation or purification movement started in England by Wycliff. The movement was suppressed by law, but it left a legacy in the form of a translation of the Bible into English and by drawing people's attention to certain unreasonable doctrines taught by the church.

Wycliff and his followers denied the doctrine of the Transubstantiation or the truth that in the Christian Mass Service the wine and bread were converted into the blood and flesh of Jesus by the prayers or *mantras* uttered by the priests. Evidently people had begun to reason. This attitude, later on, led to the great Reformation Movement of Luther. It is this Reformation Movement of the sixteenth century that freed Europe from the thralldom to authority and people began to think for themselves. It is this freedom in thinking and reasoning that has made Europe great and this greatness has been attained in despite of the church.

The Reformation was preceded by an intellectual awakening of Europe caused by another movement, the Renaissance.

(6) *The Renaissance* (Lit.)

Re-birth, was an intellectual movement started in the fifteenth century, mainly at Florence, under the patronage of the merchant princes, the Medicis. Italy was intellectually the most advanced country in Europe during the Middle Ages.*

* In European history the period from the earliest to the downfall of the Western Roman Empire in 410 A.D. is called the ancient time. The period from the fifth century to the fifteenth century, the discovery of America by Columbus, in 1492, is called the Middle Ages, and the period from the end of the fifteenth century upto the present time, the modern time. Italy was the seat of the Pope and Italian priests enjoyed a pre-eminence throughout Europe. Italian painters, poets, and architects were the most noted in Europe. Latin was the learned tongue, and though modern Italian was a vernacular derived from Latin, yet Dante who had written his "Divine Comedy" in Italian was the greatest

(7) *The secularisation of life* due to the spirit of worldliness that was encouraged by the Renaissance checked the morbid spirit of zeal for religion, and it led to a decline of the influence of the priest on life. Learning had been so long confined to the priests and priests were ministers of kings. But the ministers of Queen Elizabeth of England were all lay men. People began to study all subjects, instead of leaving education to the priests. Laymen became leaders of thought. This is the modern spirit that began to operate owing to the new intellectual awakening. Then came the spiritual and ethical movement of Luther called,

European poet. Thus Italy became the centre of the new intellectual turmoil called the Renaissance.

In 1453 when Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, was captured by the Turks, the Renaissance began. The Roman Empire had become divided in the fifth century into two branches. The portion to the west of the Adriatic was called the Western Roman Empire with Rome as its capital. The Eastern Roman Empire survived one thousand years more after the fall of Rome in the fifth century, at the hands of the northern invaders, the Gauls. In 1453 many Greek scholars fled from Constantinople to Italy and other European countries. These scholars awakened Europe to the Greek literature, philosophy, etc., which Europe had forgotten, being too busy with the Latin books, specially the Bible, and the Deductive Logic of Aristotle, which had been translated from Arabic into Latin. The Arabs, during the first five hundred years after the rise of their religion in the 6th century, had been characterised by a great receptivity and had learned things from all the nations they came in contact with. They learned things from the Hindus, the Greeks and the Jews and founded Universities at Bagdad, Gazni, Cordova and Granada in Spain, etc.

European Universities of Paris, founded about 1000, A.D., and of Bologna were founded by Christian nations in imitation of the Islamic centres of learning. Cambridge and Oxford were founded in the 12th century, when Henry II quarrelled with Becket, the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury. Before the Renaissance in the

(8) *The Reformation.* It enfranchised the intellect of Europe from the bond of authority. When the sun rises, light comes from all directions. Similarly in the sixteenth century, God made a special manifestation of his light and Europe became eager to shake off the spiritual yoke of the Pope, an ultramontane (beyond the mountain, the Alps) authority. The national dignity of the northern nations refused to submit to a foreigner, an Italian. It began in a small way. Luther was a monk in a village, trying earnestly to improve his flock by his ministration. At this time a pardon-seller, an agent of the Pope, came there to raise money by selling certificates of pardon for various sins that people might have committed. People came to him to confess their transgressions and he would hear them in confession and for a money-payment would issue a certificate of pardon. A man becomes purified not by sincere repentance but by paying some money to the priest, the Pope! Luther protested against

fifteenth century Europe knew very little of the Greek literature, philosophy and science. There is a freshness and originality in the writings of the Greeks, which inspires originality in the reader. They were people who never relied on authority but made their own investigation and research and arrived at independent conclusions. Therefore, when the atmosphere of Europe had been electrified with advanced thinking, as the result of the acquaintance with Greek learning, a new life began. In our country also the freshness of the European literature and the spirit of independent thinking of English writers at the commencement of this modern education, produced a similar awakening and the result was the nineteenth-century outburst in Bengal in all spheres of thinking. About this time, some geographical discoveries such as, the discovery of America by Columbus, an Italian, the arrival

this interference with the good work that he was doing in a German village. This protest raised the storm that led to the denial of the authority of the Pope by half the nations of northern Europe. Luther translated the Bible into German and proved the unreasonableness of the infallibility of the Pope. People began to read the Bible for themselves and determine truth by reading the Bible. Thus Luther became the founder of independent thinking in Europe. In England also there were Greek scholars and an intellectual awakening began. England becoming protestant translated the Bible. This vernacular Bible must have produced a very enlightening effect. About three hundred martyrs were burnt in England by the catholic queen Mary*

This spirit of freedom in religion led to the spirit of political freedom in England, and the extreme protestants, the puritans, fought against their King, Charles I, for their political freedom. In fact, it is this protestant spirit that has made England what she is to-day. The nation became adventurous, founded colonies, circumnavigated the world and founded the East India Company that won the Empire of India.

at Calicut of Vasco de Gama in 1498, combined with certain astronomical discoveries, changed people's view-point of life. So long the best intellects and best men in Europe had looked upon the world as a vale of tears and as a place given over to the Devil and hence they became monks and friars to live in the monasteries, cut off from the enjoyment of life. Now a worldliness was preached and the love between man and woman became a glorious subject of poetry. Many monks married and led decent lives. Life became secularised, so to say.

* See Foxe's "Book of Martyrs."

(9) *Rationalisation* and the scientific spirit of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries were the consequences of the intellectual and spiritual freedom inaugurated by the Reformation.* People began to study the various branches of science, and philosophical investigation in the inductive method was started by Descartes and Bacon. A new spirit had come over Europe and they were filled with a restlessness. Hobbes, Locke and others wrote philosophies and started enquiries into the sources of man's knowledge. Sir Isaac Newton made wonderful investigation into physical phenomena and published his *Principia*, which opened vistas of thoughts on Nature. In the eighteenth century, in France, a new Illumination took place through the work of Voltaire, Rousseau, Motesquieu and the Encyclopaedists. They began to doubt the revelations of the Bible and English free thinkers also denied the truth of Christianity. There was a wide spirit of scepticism in the eighteenth century. Thinkers denied the claims of superiority by kings, priests and nobility and Rousseau in his "Social Contract," preached the Rights of Man as "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." These ideals fired the French and other nations, and since 1789, these Rights have been asserted everywhere and worked out. We in India, also, like other Asiatic countries, are trying to work out these ideals in

* The Royal Society of London was founded by Charles II in 1662.

all the spheres of our activity. Really the enlightening effect of the French Revolution has affected human destiny more powerfully than any other modern movement. Several books have been written on the effects of the French Ideals as taught by Rousseau. During the last one hundred and fifty years, the whole world is changing under the inspiration created by Rousseau's teaching.

Then when the wars created by the French ideals came to an end in 1815, with the fall and confinement of Napoleon at St. Helena, the spirit of freedom awakened inquiry into every thing concerning man.

The rationalistic attitude of the nineteenth century is much more free and comprehends all spheres of human thought and activity. It is difficult to characterise the tendencies of the nineteenth century by one formula. Though the *scientific attitude* may be its chief note, the nineteenth century has been true to its heritage derived from all the previous centuries of human history and disregards nothing. It is trying to appreciate all national cults and cultures, including cultures of the most backward races. It appreciates everything and is carrying on scientific investigation into the origin and history of all things in nature, all epochs of history, all races and their manners etc., and all systems of philosophy and religion. Nothing is rejected now as unworthy of our study and research. There are parliaments of religions and other inter-

national gatherings held to discuss the affairs of all men and for the purpose of helping all men. No doubt in this enlightening work of the nineteenth century the European nations have taken up the lead and hence brought about the *Europeanisation* that is going on everywhere. It means the mechanisation of industries and the administration of affairs on democratical principles.

(10) The comprehensive rationalisation of the nineteenth century and also of the twentieth may be called the Europeanisation of human life. It includes the *Democratisation* of all institutions and laws and mechanisation of all industries with the help of science. It is difficult, however, to predict where the world will be led by this Europeanisation. Science is being used more for destructive work and for the enslavement of weaker races by the stronger. Hence the Europeanisation amounts to a sort of animalization instead of divinisation of man, as the scientific advancement and the other modern progressive movements are killing the faith in God and the spirit of reverence in man. A tendency of secularisation is fearfully going on, denying future life and the spirituality of human nature. We may characterise this as materialisation of man's life and soul. Our old civilisation was developed for the purpose of divinisation of human nature. Man was to be made into a God, by being purified from the bonds of animality, but now the tendency is to show that these old

ideals were unrealities and the realities are the body of man and his life in this world. The student will note that humanity is now extremely anxious for worldly success and bodily happiness and pleasures. Hence a historian says that "the world is growing ill-mannered and immoral" The mechanisation and industrialisation of the modern time are leading to the unemployment of large numbers of men everywhere, and no solution is being provided for this problem of unemployment. If men become quite rational and free from passions, then alone they will be able to live in peace, otherwise more destructive wars will take place with the help of science. Nobody can foresee what will happen to man during the ages that he is expected to survive in this mundane sphere.

An Appreciation by
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I have gone through your discourse on *Currents of Thought in the European Literature* with great interest and must express to you my gratitude for the pleasure and profit I have derived from its perusal. I am sure it will be helpful not only to the students whom you have in view but also to the wider public interested in culture.

The chief merit of your treatise is the synthetic outlook you have sought to develop. That the history of literature is not a mere matter of individual books and authors, that the movements of literature are closely connected with the movements of life; that the life of humanity as reflected in the literature of different regions of the globe, in spite of its diversities, is really one,—these are some of the truths that are brought home to the reader, as he runs through your pages. The attempt to understand and estimate the main currents of European thought from the Indian point of view gives your dissertation a freshness and originality of outlook which is bound to add to its interest and value. The Indian student of European literature will rise from a study of your book with a keener sense

of the reality and vital significance of the worn-out topics of his academic routine. He will begin to see with his own eyes and think for himself. There is a good deal of well-digested learning comprised in your book, and a remarkable amount of well-considered views and arguments, but I think its most valuable feature is the stimulus it gives to freedom of thought and outlook.

Preface

The Essays under the caption, "The Currents of Thought in the European Literature," are mainly intended for the students of the B. A. Honours and M. A. classes in English, as most of them do not read history and hence feel some difficulty in understanding the history of the English literature. In lecturing to the honours students on "the History of the English Literature," I found that most students could not intelligently grasp the nature of the epochs of the development of the English literature, as they had no knowledge of the historical background of the thoughts presented by the great writers. The subject is a very big one, viz., the presentation of the European mind through the ages. Practically, it is the making of modern Europe that is the subject matter of these essays. I intend to indicate merely the outlines of the different epoches, so that the earnest student may make his own study to fill in the outlines and form more adequate idea of the changes through which the European mind has passed. We, Indian students, again, have some inherited ideas and ideals of ethical and spiritual life. These are a little different from those of the European nations, whose ideals are now our study. Hence some comparison and criticism is necessary to grasp fully the European view-points. European writers have a certain superiority-complex and we being a conquered race an inferiority-complex. These two factors have been working on our intellectual outlook during the last hundred years and are seriously interfering with the development of the Hindu intellect. It is absolutely necessary to

try to undo this hypnotism as far as practicable and to point out the limitations of the European ideals. European ideals have their value but the superiority assumed on their behalf cannot go any more unchallenged. Within the narrow range of these essays, it is not possible fully to expose wherein European superiority lies and wherein we need not submit to them. Yet some hints and suggestions given in these essays will be useful to the intelligent and inquisitive Indian youth, who will pursue the hints further and form his own estimate of them. We have had a very old system of education in this country and almost all subjects of intellectual pursuit were investigated by our ancestors. We are not intellectual orphans. Hence we should be a little on our guard as to what foreign truths we shall adopt and how we may assimilate them. The enthusiasm with which the Hindu youth accepted the truths from the western teachers one hundred years ago has now cooled down a little, on account of the emergence of the spirit of nationality and the awakening of national self-consciousness. The ardour with which the youths of former generations rejected the truths of Indian origin is now found out to be misdirected. The national awakening has tremendously influenced our attitude and we can no longer remain satisfied with quoting the European critics as their apt pupils, but must test them in the light of the longer and deeper experiences of our ancestors. All truths are, after all, the results of human experiences and the experience of the diverse races of humanity will come to be accepted and digested as the data of human knowledge in future. We can no longer discard as worthless the far older and more reliable experiences of our ancestors. We have to revise our estimate of the foreign literature, philosophy and other cultural subjects before we

swallow them wholesale. It is with this object in view that these hurriedly written essays are published, so that our youths may carry on deeper enquiries that is possible with my limited knowledge of both European and native literatures into the idea and ideals that they will come across in the English literature. Before they praise and receive any thing from foreign critics and appraisers of truth, they should think a little what our ancestors have thought on those problems. Uncritical acceptance of the lessons from others will not benefit us much. We have repeated many things without caring to see if they were true, but now the times are coming when we should not repeat in that way the things that are really doubtful. During the last hundred years we, the best of us being no exception to this rule, have been mere plagiarists and parrots of European writers and thinkers. Students should remember that our education being through a foreign medium, our deepest thoughts cannot find full expression in it. The best thoughts are strangled through the lameness of foreign medium. There is an organic connection between thought and the language which may be considered as the body of the idea or thought, which is the soul. Hence we have to be very careful in generalising about things only on the testimony of foreign observers and reporters.

As literature is the expression of a national mind, a student of literature has to enquire into the Metaphysics as well as the Ethics of that nation along with the historical epochs through which the nation has passed. Many other subjects, such as, the scientific, political and industrial activities of that nation will enter into and influence the literature. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary for a Hindu

student to compare and contrast the metaphysics of the Vedanta which considers the external world as existing in the Brahman along with the popular metaphysics of European writers which consider the world as made up of a duality of matter and spirit and Ethics as made up of the duality of God and the Devil or of the duality of good and evil. These dualities are like the qualities of cold and heat and good one has to transcend these dualities. Hence in *Hindu writings so much store has not been laid by the ethical principles of conduct*. These principles they consider as absolutely necessary for man's conduct and yet ethics is not the perfection to be attained by man. His perfection consists in realising Brahman or considering the universe as a manifestation of God. The Hindu's conception of salvation, also, is, therefore, a little different. Hindus believe in a spiritual monism which denies the existence of evil and matter. In European thinking, ethical conceptions cannot be transcended. Dr. Johnson, a profound believer in Christianity, justifies the doctrine of eternal punishment of the sinner by the argument that man throughout eternity will transgress and hence the need of his punishment and purification. In the Hindu system of spiritual realisation unification with God is to be attained here and in this life and sin does not occupy so important a place. Many things that are considered as sins by the Christian ascetic are considered as promptings of nature, by the Hindu Sadhak. All works and activities of man, whether good or otherwise, are due to the impulses of Nature. The religious adept has to rise superior to these impulses. But they are not sins. Unless the Indian student knows something about his ancestors' faith and principles of spiritual and ethical life, he cannot be expected to appreciate the writings of

European thinkers properly. Many things that are considered as worth achieving by the practical teachers of Europe have been belittled by the Hindu thinkers, whose obsession was spiritual attainment. Wordly success and prosperity are even now of very little worth, considering the shortness of life. Life being simple, its needs were easily met here, and therefore no such anxiety was felt for adventure and success. Begging has been considered as *degrading by the economical thinkers of Europe*, but here the best of men are even now beggars; and poverty was voluntarily accepted by the Brahmins as favourable to the pursuit of knowledge and practice of piety. We have outgrown these ideals, yet they should be noticed. Modern Indian economists, after their European teachers, regret many things that were not regretted formerly. People did not require banks, because industries were carried on in private houses with small capitals, and others spent away the accumulated wealth in their hand for performing religious ceremonies. Thus money circulated in the community and did not remain as deposits in banks. Western writers talk of India's hoarded wealth and blame the foolishness of hoarding.

This is really a misapprehension of the Indian mentality. Indian people were much more charitable than any other nation and the hostility between the rich and the poor was not so acute. The poor were helped by the rich in various ways. Even during the childhood of the present writer, it was a custom of well-to-do peasants and farmers to spend their savings for religious purposes of feeding the poor and others. In spite of raiders and plunderers of "the barbric wealth" of the east, Indian life went on "in an even tenor," without such devastating and chronic famines as now.

Hence the earnest Hindu student cannot accept the truth taught in the universities without testing them in the light of our national experiences. These Essays are meant to give a few suggestions here and there for the purpose of the comparison that is essentially necessary. It may be *hoped* that a student who will go through these essays with appreciation will not find them useless for his guidance in the search after truth.

SHILLONG,

The 2nd November, 1938.

The Author.

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APPENDIX.

CURRENTS OF THOUGHT IN THE EUROPEAN LITERATURE

CHAPTER I.

Literature.

Literature is the best medium through which the life of a nation finds expression. Social manners and customs have their value in the eye of a foreigner, but in literature the inmost and deepest yearnings find expression. The peculiarity in the life of a nation consists in the vision and the longings of its poets and seers and these are the outcome of religious and historical development in the past. Both history and poetry of a nation record its experiences and yearnings and they need to be analysed and appreciated for the purpose of ascertaining the tendencies of their life and activity.

Literature is generally the outcome of three factors, *viz.*, the race genius of the people, the surroundings under which they lead their lives and the epochs of history through which they have passed. The Semitic, the Aryan, the Mongolian races have their peculiarities and their

sub-divisions also, such as, the **Hellenic**, the *Latin*, the *Celtic*, the *Indian* and the *Persian* Aryans, the Teutonic Aryans, have their *peculiarities* and also their general traits. The Semitic races, such as, the *Phoenicians*, the *Jews*, the *Arabs*, the *Assyrians* had their peculiarities. Among the Mongols also the *Chinese*, the *Japanese*, the *Koreans*, the *Siamese*, the *Burmese*, the *Tibetans*, the *Bhotanese* have their peculiarities and general characteristics and habits. All these must be studied in their histories and religions. The study of the race genius of the different nationalities is a huge task, yet if we wish to understand their literatures, we have to face this labour and do it as best as we can.

A thorough grasp of the geographical peculiarities of the regions inhabited by the different nationalities is another requirement. In the nineteenth century Buckles, Taine and others attached a great importance to this factor. Buckles in his "History of Civilisation" has beautifully developed this factor in the account of the literature of England and Scotland. M. Taine also has strongly emphasised this factor in his "History of the English Literature," "History of European Painting" and other books. The effects of climates and other topographical peculiarities have a great influence on the literature of a nation. Animals, plants etc., are the results of the two factors, *viz.*, the seeds and the environment, so to say. Man, a moral and a spiritual entity, is not so helplessly a creature

of these two factors alone. He can control them, alter them and compel them to serve his spiritual ideals. These spiritual ideals, also no doubt, are brought into existence, from time to time, and new eras or epochs, such as, the introduction of Christianity into Europe, the Renaissance and the Reformation movements, are initiated by the historical developments of nations through which they pass. These epochs may be considered as the results of special manifestation of divine will in the affairs of mankind. God's will operates in all times and places, yet at times special revelations take place. The theory of God's incarnation as adumbrated in the Gita verses (iv. 7-8) may be rationally explained in this way. At certain epochs special manifestations of the divine power and goodness are made in certain individuals, who are called by Carlyle Heroes or great men, and in their sympathisers and associates. Thus are brought into existence ages or eras of heroes. Several men are born with the same ideals and work them out, and regenerate and uplift humanity. Our Puranic incarnations are such heroes or great men. There have been such eras and epochs that have occurred in the life time of every nation and have moulded their thoughts and ideals. Though the details of the history of a nation may not be needed for the student of its literature, yet a general knowledge and a grasp of the epochs and eras in its history is essential for understanding its literature.

The literatures of the modern European nations, the English, the French, the Germans, the Italians, the Spaniards and others have grown on the soil of their race-genius under the fostering influence of the atmosphere created by the literature of Greece and Rome and the spiritual vision opened by the religious teachings of the Jews. Greece gave to the European mind models of beauty for its artistic expression and pointed out the lines along which the truth of the physical universe might be studied and gleaned. Rome has given to Europe lessons on the art of government and organisation of institutions. Roman laws constitute the foundation of the system of laws in Europe and whatever discipline we see in Europe to-day is an effect of the discipline established by the Romans in their family life as well as in the public life of the Eternal City. This discipline made them a moral people who gave an excellent development to the teachings of the stoic moralists. In art, whether sculpture, or poetry, music or architecture the Greeks are even now the models and samples, and in philosophy and science Plato and Aristotle are still the ideal teachers. The lines they have laid down must be followed with necessary modifications required by the altered circumstances of our modern life. For legislators, the senators of Rome remain still the models, because they were an "Assembly of kings," in whom practical wisdom of the art of ruling others was gradually and beautifully developed.

They were credited with the highest wisdom and patriotism and Pyrrhus was defeated not only by Roman arms but by the wisdom of her venerable "conscript fathers".

The organisation of the Christian church which was moulded by the Roman imperial arrangement of the first four hundred years of the Christian era has very largely been at the basis of the political organisation of all the European nations till the 18th century. Just as the organisation of the Indian Hindus' life has been mainly an outcome of Brahmanical ideals, similarly the organisation of the life and institutions of the European nation has been the results of the ideals of the Christian teachers of the Middle Ages. Europe has not as yet been able to shake off the forms given to her life by the monks and priests who were disciplined by the Pope or spiritual Emperor of Europe. This spiritual Emperor is still ruling the southern half of Europe. Spiritual freedom that is enjoyed by Hindu Sannyasins, Bairagis and Bauls is a thing beyond the conception of European aspirants after spiritual light. The discipline that we admire in the secular life of the European nations is the joint product of the political discipline of the Romans, confirmed by the spiritual discipline enforced by the popes of Rome. The indiscipline that characterises the Hindus to-day is their heritage of ages accentuated by their political serfdom that has robbed them of the true sense of responsibility for themselves and

others. Hindu ideal of spiritual freedom, inspite of their devotion to *gurus* and *sastras* that are too many and often contradictory, and their belief in many gods, has made discipline among them hard to be established. The Semitic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam have still one book and one ideal each to follow. Hence the better discipline and better organisation among the Islamic and Christian nations. Their discipline has lessons for us, though our freedom cannot be given up. The religion of a Hindu is undefinable, as every Sadhak is to attain truth for himself

We shall illustrate these currents flowing from Greece, Rome and Palestine in the East through the strata of European thoughts by referring specially to the writings of English poets and thinkers, and occasionally to other writers as well. The continent of Europe has developed its civilisation after the same models, their national peculiarities notwithstanding, just as the Hindus of the different provinces of India have developed their cultures in the moulds of the Vedic ideals with necessary modifications created by the local environments and certain historical epochs. India is one spiritually, so is Europe. A civilisation has to be tested by its outward forms, in its arts, industries, government, commerce and other activities for the comfort and happiness of the body; but more by its spiritual ideals and religious institutions. This spiritual ideal is better manifest in its literature.

If man were simply the body without a soul like other animals, then the superiority of Europe would surely be unquestioned and undoubted. But man is more essentially a spirit, a soul, and his outward environment cannot always affect the soul, which often denies the influence of the environment, and goes directly against it. How far the currents flowing from Greece and Rome as well as from Palestine have been favourable to the soul of Europe is the problem that we shall attempt a little to understand.

CHAPTER II.

Religion.

In our last preliminary section we tried to state, in a general way, the contributions made by the Greek, the Roman and the Jewish cultures to the culture and civilisation of Europe. Now we mean to indicate a little particularly the factors that each of these three sources supplied to the making of Europe and thus bring out the limitations that we aim at pointing out as inherent in the European conception of the good, the true and the beautiful.

The conception of beauty is an inherent attribute of the human mind, no doubt, yet there are vast differences among the ideas and ideals of beauty, as we find them developed in different civilisations. The Greek people are credited with having created the best models of beauty in form. They made their limbs beautiful by gymnastic exercise, their sky and other surroundings were beautiful. They were a beautiful race and their images, their temples and other things that survive in the relics preserved, demonstrate the perfection of their arts. But it can hardly be said that the heroes and heroines of their epics and dramas are very beautiful; neither their heroes nor their heroines will satisfy the modern reader.

The constitutions *e.g.* those of Sparta have been characterised by historians and political

writers as symmetrical and beautiful in form. The marble with which they made their gods and temples was the best. Their literary productions, epics, dramas, lyrics, prose compositions are even now models of perfections in form for the civilised people of Europe. Thus beauty in form was developed by them most carefully and they have left it as a legacy to Europe.

Though no relics of their painting have survived, yet it may be guessed that they practised this branch also of the fine arts and attained perfection, but as there was no durable material for painting the pictures upon available and no museum or any place for preserving them existed, they were destroyed by the wear and tear of time and also by the changes that are inevitable in the things of this world.

Plato and his master Socrates arrived at the conclusion that virtue was the most beautiful thing. Socrates, however, teaches that among material things the useful only is the beautiful and that utility ultimately is to be identified with that which is good or morally beneficial. So that the good and the beautiful are identical. The idea of the inwardness of beauty was certainly an advance and improvement upon the popular conception, and pointed out a spiritual origin of beauty. Plato developed these ideas of beauty as essentially spiritual and ethical. This spiritual beauty did not influence the mass mind of Greece or Rome and their gods and goddesses continued to be immoral and inferior to human

beings in their character and activities, though they were conceived as the most beautiful beings imaginable. The fairies of the mediaeval romance and myth were similarly conceived as beautiful, clever, powerful (more for doing harms perhaps) but non-moral or morally irresponsible beings.

When Christianity established a firmer grasp of the principles of morality in the life of the European people, since the fifth century onward, the conception of the highest beauty met with its realisation in angels and supermen in whom beauty was associated with goodness, purity and other moral virtues. Thus Christianity freed the popular mind of Europe from its grossness and popularised the highest ideals of Plato. Plato anticipated the lofty teachings of the Gospels in many of his musings, but his ideals were not realised in the mass minds until the successors of St. Paul made these truths matters of discipline and practice. In the artistic representations of Raphael, Michael Angelo and others of the Middle Ages as well as of modern times thus goodness and beauty have come to be so closely associated. This ideal was developed by the Christian devotees and artists, so that now people so glibly talk of "arts for the sake of arts." They would not assert this theory if they went a little deeper into the investigation of the development of the conception of beauty as realised in the arts and literature of Europe. "Truth is beauty and beauty is truth," only

when truth includes and is identified with goodness.

The strong ethical note in the modern European literature is due to the influence of Christian, or, for the matter of that, Jewish morality. Modern European nations have followed the models of beauty created by Greece and by her disciple, Rome, but their souls were fed and their imaginations nourished on the spiritual visions not of Olympus, but of Zion Hill. The conceptions of future life as developed in the religions of Greece and Rome were vague and indefinite and could not exert any healthy influence on the activities of the masses. The lives of the common people in both the classic lands were without any lofty ideals, and so when their faith in the gods of Olympus became shaky, they underwent an awful degeneration. Neither the moralities of the Platonic philosophers and their disciples, nor that of the Stoics could stem the tide of the degeneration of the people of Greece and Rome during several centuries till the establishment of Christian principles in their lives. Morality became strong, when based on religion and religion became a reality, when pointing to a definite future and being concretised, so to say, in the life of the devotees, the monks and priests, who lived and worked to establish the kingdom of God in this world.

Thus the chief distinguishing feature of the modern literature consists in its insistence on the

inviolability of the moral principles. The responsibility of man for his conduct was not so clearly realised by the Hellenic teachers. In Homer's conception men and women are playthings in the hands of the Gods and the Goddesses, who use them as pawns in their games of rivalry and jealousy. Troy is destroyed to please Juno, who had a grudge against Paris, the son of Priam, because Paris awarded the prize of beauty to Venus.

Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Pindar also do not ascribe all evils and sorrows of man to their own doings. They teach that a mystery hangs over the destiny of man, whose efforts are over-borne by a Supreme Force against whom nothing avails. The good and the pure suffer in this world and men are victimised by unforeseen and unmerited wrongs. Yet these teachers cannot definitely assert, if these wrongs will be righted in an assured state of future existence. The great Stoic teachers of Rome Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus had arrived at lofty conceptions of man's ethical life and Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius were practically theists and believed in a future state of existence, yet they could not influence the mass minds that floundered in the morass of uncertainty. From this vagueness and doubt, the definiteness in the teachings of the Jewish people *i.e.*, Christianity, saved the people of Europe.

The greatness of Dante lies in this that he put the highest teachings of Christianity in the

most popular and poetical form, so that his teachings influenced the literatures of all the European nations. Poetry everywhere, when it becomes popular, very deeply touches all the strata of society. The imperative nature of moral obligation and the unavoidableness of the consequences of sins of all kinds is powerfully illustrated by the examples given by Dante in his "*Inferno*," which is the most sublime portion of his "*Divine Comedy*." All the mediaeval writers in different European countries were influenced by Dante. Every student of Chaucer will notice that though Chaucer is an artist and creator of beauty, he is above all a Christian believer. It is this belief that is the chief note in the writers of modern times also. Man's greatness is in his soul, and nobody who is indifferent to the destiny of the soul can be acclaimed as great. Shakespeare may not be a theologian or a saint like Augustine, but throughout the dramas and other things that he has left us this spiritual note is the bass voice. His best characters are men and women with visions directed to the future. Desdemona "saw Othello's visage in his mind;" Cordelia is to be rewarded hereafter. Ophelia and other good girls depicted by Shakespeare are all decidedly moral people, believing in a higher life than the life of the flesh. They may not be saints or preachers, but they take their stand on a firm principle of the reality of the human soul. They do not live in the body, but in a purer world.

CHAPTER III.

The question of Evils.

We have seen in the last section that the ethical note in the literature of Europe is due to the influence based on the dualistic metaphysics of Christianity. The dualistic conception of evil as contradictory to good and in constant feud with the latter is very helpful to our ethical life. All religions which this metaphysics underlies are characterised by a strong moral attitude which makes the followers of these persuasions ruthless enemies to what they consider to be a moral evil. The hatred that they feel against the evil is uncompromising and eternal. No quarters must be given to the enemy and he must be utterly annihilated. Satan is hurled into hell and is to remain there for good. There is no purgatory or any hope of purification or repentance for him and his followers, the fallen angels. Milton's theme in "Paradise Lost" is this punishment of Satan, the egotist, the denier of God. He is to be eternally punished.

According to the religion taught by the Avesta, Ormuz or Auhura Mazda is in eternal feud with Ahriman, *i.e.* the two principles of good and evil are ever fighting with each other for victory and the belief is that ultimately good will triumph. This is surely an optimistic note and Christianity, the child of Judaism, inherited

this optimism as a result of the association of the Jews with the Persians who conquered them and brought a large part of them as captives to Babylonia where they sojourned for about seventy years. This contact of the Jews with the ethical teachings of the east benefited them in many ways. It widened their narrow outlook and gave them a liberal training which afterwards resulted in a deeper spiritual life as manifested in Jesus. There is no doubt that the Jews were a receptive nation and imbibed the best teachings of the nations living around them.

The book of Genesis in the Old Testament tells us that Adam the first man ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge in disobedience to the command of God and thus from his disobedience originated sin and death. It is true that to disobey the command issued by God who speaks through our conscience causes our fall or sin, but it is unthinkable to us that knowledge can be forbidden, specially the knowledge of good and evil. Sir Oliver Lodge somewhere tells us that we may consider this fall of Adam rather as a rise from the state of ignorance of good and evil to the consciousness of right and wrong, or the first acquisition by this human child of the light of conscience. But those who believe in this fable of the fall of Adam interpret it differently. God's command must be obeyed, whatever it may be, say they. Religious injunctions, they opine, even if unreasonable, must be obeyed. In the Catholic Church a popular dogma runs to

the effect that "because a thing is unreasonable, therefore it ought to be believed and is obligatory." Reason and faith are contradictory in the estimation of some orthodox people. Reason has thus been abnegated in the orthodox circles everywhere, more or less. This, however, is by the way.

One thing in connection with the question of evil is that in the Book of *Genesis*, it is the serpent, the cunningest of animals, that tempts Eve to transgress the command of God, and not Satan or the Devil entering into the body of the serpent. It is patristic writers who developed this myth in this form which Milton adopts in his "Paradise Lost" and most educated people to day in England and in India do not care to note the difference between the teaching of the Bible and that of Milton on this point. Throughout the Middle Ages this teaching of the Fathers got currency, so that the Devil came to be the source of all evils. He was the incarnation of all troubles and wrongs that afflicted European humanity. He was the instigator of witches, who were burnt alive. Even Joan of Arc, the purest girl of France, was not spared. As being an immature girl, she achieved such wonderful victories over the invading English armies, she must have been inspired by the evil One. This was the opinion of the learned and the devout ecclesiastics of the 15th century! Lecky in his "History of Rationalisation in Europe" notes that they burnt in this way one hundred thousand

old and decrepit women as witches. How many were burnt as heretics in different countries is known to the student of history. And all these atrocities were ultimately due to the belief in the Devil, who misled all classes of sinners. Sir Walter Scott gives a vivid picture of this belief in the persecution of Rebecca by the Christian monks in his "Ivanhoe," and saves the poor Jewish girl through the generous heroism of Ivanhoe, the hero of the tale. It is very doubtful whether this belief in an external source of evil can be eradicated from the popular mind, whether here or in Europe. In our country people strongly believe in evil genii and witches who give troubles to mankind. But here the elite and rational people were free from such beliefs, though their literature cannot be regarded as absolutely free from this superstition. Satan, the best character in Milton's "Paradise Lost," is an outcome of this belief; and we cannot think that Milton believed his Satan to be a metaphorical personage like Britrasur of our myth on which Hemchandra has based his Epic. The part played by Satan or Lucifer is very important in European literature. We have our incarnations of evil in Raban, Durjodhan, Kangsha, Sisupal and others. In Goethe's Faust, Marlowe's "Dr. Faustus," for instance, this tempter of man figures largely. Mere knowledge apart from Bhakti or love of God makes man liable to the temptation by the evil one.

Hindu philosophy does not create an unbridgeable gulf between evil and good, but considers them as necessary dualities to be utilised and outgrown for higher spiritual life, in which Ekamebadwitiyam (one without a second) is the highest objective of spiritual endeavours. Rama and Ravana both are necessary for the *lila* of God and we have to learn from both. Our metaphysics may be defective from the standpoint of the schoolmaster, who is bent on teaching certain moral principles to the boys under his care, but it is a higher truth and this higher truth has made the Hindu so patient and tolerant towards the evil. He has a zeal for the good, but he lacks the zeal of reformers and is never fanatical.

The necessary corollary of the Mosaic laws and the dualistic Christian philosophy has been the belief in the eternal damnation of the non-Christian and the Kafir, and the burning of the sinner in hell fire and also of the burning and destruction of heretics! The monistic Adwaita-bada which finds in the Brahman room for all the diversities and varieties of creeds and cultures has made us apathetic towards the errors of others and made us averse from proselytising zeal, but has saved us from the vandalism and kindling of hell fire for others, though there may have been some fanatics in the latter days of Hinduism, when king Sasanka of Bengal, an orthodox king, is said to have been a ruthless persecutor of the Buddhists and is said to have

committed the vandalism of uprooting the famous tree under which Gautama Buddha performed his penances. There are other stories of persecution by the Buddhists and orthodox kings in the more recent times, but these were rather exceptions than the rule.

Our Buddhist missionaries who were carriers of the message of love and goodwill were gladly accepted by others and though they professed equality and fraternity they had not to fight with any one, as the enlightened French Revolutionists did. European enlightenment is often spread at the point of the bayonet and the Napoleonic wars will be considered as the worst stain on the history of Europe in future. Carlyle, a descendant of the Genevan and Knoxian fanaticism, defends the use of the sword by Mahomet, but we cannot agree in toto with his defence (see his Essay on "the Hero as Prophet"). We believe God will manifest himself to every earnest soul and reveal His truths in the course of aeons and I need not force it on another. If he seeks my help, I shall do as much as I can for him.

The transcendent nature of the Godhead as taught by Jewish and Christian theism as distinguished from the pantheistic view of Hinduism, which teaches the existence of God everywhere, has made the externalisation of evil and the existence of evil spirits to mislead men very popular with European poets and the masses. Milton following Christian theologians represents

the gods and goddesses of heathen nations as incarnations of the fallen angels, the companions of Satan. Semitic theism labours under this narrow outlook and the hostile attitude of the Christian and Islamic masses to the Gods and Goddesses of other dispensations even to-day is traceable to this conception of Satan or Evil spirit. Vice and Sin in Elizabethan dramas, the villains in tragedies are all, more or less, the effects of this belief, though the rationalisation of the modern time is leading men's thought to the internal evil in men, viz., the evil propensities. In our *Chandi Puran*, however, the Ashuras (Mahishasur and Ajashur) were consciously created as figurative or allegorical creatures. The Allegories of the Morality plays had pointed them out to the deeper thinkers, yet the influence of the Bible and the story of the Fall of Man through the temptation of Satan or the Devil is still keeping up the faith in an external source of evil. It has contributed to man's moral development, to a certain extent, but has created an enmity with Satan or those whom you may consider as followers of Satan or the evil spirits.

CHAPTER IV.

True universalism.

In our last section we hinted at the Universalism of the Hindu, who harmonises evil and good as dualities. In this we indicate a little clearly what we mean. There has been a fundamental unity in the Indian Civilisation since the days of the Rigveda and it is a spiritual bond that has persisted inspite of the innumerable sects and cults among the Hindus. The Hindu Mahasava has acted very wisely by defining all religions of Indian origin as included in the concept of Hinduism. And if we rely on experience and not on the so-called revealed books, then we shall realise fully the meaning of the saying, "Dogmas divide, but religious experiences unite." About thirty years ago a book written by a distinguished Japanese author, named Okakura, so far as I remember, created a stir among the educated section in our country, *i.e.* Bengal, because he pointed out the spiritual unity of Asia, and traced the great world religions to their Asiatic origin. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism, all have essentially the same spiritual outlook and the same inwardness of spiritual vision. They teach the transitoriness of this life and cherish the belief in a better hereafter. Neither the Greeks,

inspite of their intellectual greatness in the realm of Arts and Literature, nor the Romans, though the wisest in politics and legal relations between man and man, could attain to that clear vision of the future of man. They also realised the transiency of the human life, but had not been able to form any sure conclusion as the founders of the Asiatic religions had done. The following beautiful lines may be quoted from Homer as to the shortness of human life :

“ Brave son of Tydeus,
 wherefore set thy mind
My race to know ?
 The generations are
As if the leaves,
 so also mankind.
As the leaves fall,
 now withering in the wind
And others are put forth,
 and spring descends,
Such on the earth the race of
 man we find,
Each in his order a set time
 attends;
One generation rises and
 another ends ”

(From L. Collins' Homer).

Collins elsewhere says : —

"Death to these sensuous Greeks was an object of dread and aversion, chiefly because it implied in their minds something like annihilation. However vivid in some passages of their poets is the description of those happy Elysium fields where the souls of the heroes dwell, the popular belief gave to the disembodied spirit but a shadowy and colourless existence."

Now I may ask the reader to compare the idea indicated above with the following occurring in the Upanishads :

आनन्दश्चैव सत्त्विकमाणि भूतानि
जायन्ते । आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति । आनन्दं प्रयत्न्यभिसं-

विशन्ति । (All creatures come out of Joy; live in joy and on dissolution enter into joy again"). Our readers are acquainted, we may hope, with the lofty teachings of the Gita as to the immortality of the soul. Christianity and Islam both raise a firm hope in a better state on the dissolution of the body. Man's survival after death has been thus the main truth of the religious systems developed in Asia. The communalist politicians of our country should take note of this unity rather than of their narrow cultures which are bound to become obsolete and to be outgrown in course of time. The whole of mankind is tending towards a unity of cultures and ideals and not to recognise this is to belie all education and culture of the modern time. The Hindu Rishis of old had the widest possible outlook on life and invited the whole

humanity as *Amritasya Putra* (sons of the Immortal) to hear the good news: **शृण्वन्तु विष्णवे**

अमृतस्यपुत्रा : (Hear Ye, sons of the Immortal).

The salvation they aimed at was meant for all and not for any small group. They did not divide humanity into Hindus and non-Hindus, or according to any other category and though later on castes became rigid, yet the greatness of the soul of man was not forgotten. It is this view of man which has made possible the development of heterodox cults and sects that discarding castes and other social distinctions have taken their stand on the universal nature of man. It is this Universalism of the Hindu mind that has made him so tolerant and catholic and averse from the proselytising spirit. Hinduism has never been aggressive, but it has been assimilative and it welcomes outsiders to accept its culture, not at the point of the bayonet, but quite voluntarily. The Buddhists never thrust themselves on any one, yet they were welcomed throughout the world in the third century B. C., whereas the European advocates of Liberty and Equality and Fraternity caused a deluge of blood involving whole Europe in a war of ideas for a quarter of a century. This aggressiveness was wholly alien to the spirit of our ancestors, who considered the whole of mankind as veritable sons of God. This is the grandest lesson that we should lay to our heart as the result of the study of the highest products of their

Sadhana, viz. the Upanishads. This Universalism is the result of the belief in a unity underlying the whole creation. The Vedas also say "एकं सवित्राऽबुधा वदन्ति" (The good thinkers consider Him as one, though they describe him in various ways.)

The universalism that I have tried to indicate above is realised in the soul by the introspective method, whereby the external world is conceived as existing not unrelated to the thinking mind. In fact the psychology of the Hindu considers the knowledge of the external world as not dependent on the sensations of sound, colour, hardness, softness etc. but as a relation between the perceiving mind and the objective world. The Rishi says that the Brahman or the Paramatma is the "ear of our ears, eye of our eyes, mind of our minds," and our self is merely a reflection of the soul of the universe. Europe has had as yet very little of that leisure and detachment from the sensuous life that is absolutely necessary for realising the relation of the soul with the external world. For most people the world stands apart from us and matter and mind are quite separate entities. They are parallel currents but how they are related nobody knows. This is the commonsense view.

To the scientific attitude of mind the external world and its laws exist separately from the thinking mind. From the days of Aristotle, the

fountain-head of scientific thinking, all the greatest intellects of Europe have been investigators into the laws of the material world. Goethe, the intellectual Napoleon of modern time, was not only a great poet, but a great scientist as well. This scientific attitude of mind has made Europe so practical and so successful in her efforts at making her life happy. Scientists are busy in measuring and quantifying the things they experience. How accurate they are as regards time and space! They cannot think of things except by setting them in their chronological order and European histories are scrupulously correct as regards dates and details. Macaulay, when writing the history of England, actually visited the scenes of the battles he describes, measured the grounds, and made other careful observations and has thus compiled brilliant and beautiful accounts of the battles of Killikrankie and Waterford. Carlyle, when writing the History of Frederick the Great, went to Germany and actually saw the scenes of the battles of Frederick and his book is even today a text book for the students of military colleges. Science depends on accurate knowledge of time and space and no causality, according to the scientific meaning of it, can be studied and laws discovered, unless the observation of facts be made accurate. This tendency to accurate observation is the peculiarity of the European mind and we have to learn it from them. The true scientific attitude of mind is practical and

empirical. It is not introspective. I do not mean to say that all the people of India were or are meditative or do not believe and act upon the assumption of the independent existence of the external world or that the European philosophers do not know the dependence of the external world on the thinking mind. What I mean to say is that Europe has the practical turn; we, on the contrary, are inclined to meditation. Our fundamental tendency is meditative and indifferent to the external world.

The dualistic tendency (*i.e.* distinguishing matter and spirit) of the European mind has made them ethically distinguishing evil and good and practically strong. They are zealous reformers, bold adventurers, great inventors and conquerors. They have conquered nature and weaker races, invented many things, and made life very comfortable. We and our ancestors have been compelled by the wants of the body to invent things and meet the requirements of the body, but the body to us is merely an unavoidable evil. It is an instrument for the *sadhana* (Religious exercises). If the proper discipline is not adopted, it will rather prove a clog in the way of spiritual endeavours. Our *sadhana* (spiritual exercise) has been directed towards suppressing desires and propensities. Though the monks practised austerities in Europe, these austerities in Europe have been condemned and given up. Brahminical discipline by dividing life into four stages or Ashramas reconciled the

austerities of the student life, with the enjoyment of the world in the second stage of the life of a householder and this stage again had to be outgrown in the third stage of mendicancy and renunciation combined with meditation. Thus the Rishis combined heavenly life of meditation with the life of enjoyment and with the struggle for earning one's livelihood. In Europe people's ideal is to die in the harness. Old Indian civilians or officers again manage to get jobs after retiring with pensions. Our countrymen have learned this lesson from them and the material conditions of life now have assumed an exacting claim on our efforts or Karma and we also have given the go-by to the ideals of the Ashramas. We cannot think of depending on begging in old age and dying in the street with God as our only refuge. There are, no doubt, monks and Sannyasins who even now practise such austerities. We the educated people of modern India who have learned some lessons from our European teachers and scientists are giving a good account of ourselves as scientists and discoverers, proving the potentiality of the Hindu mind. In the days of yore the Rishis also made observations and attained to truths of the external world. So they also wrote Astronomy, Geometry, Medical Science and Chemistry, etc., so far as life required these sciences. They could not, however, forget the soul and its importance and so they directed their greater efforts inwards. They divided the community into castes and gave

different pursuits to different groups of individuals and thereby gave a fixity to one's worldly endeavours and enabled all to think of the future life. The whole community thus was other-worldly. They considered this life as transitory and short and the bodily wants being easily satisfied, they became indifferent to this world. This other-worldliness and consequent regulation and discipline of life by castes and Ashramas have made us weak and the dirt of the feet of warlike and wordly-minded races. Our universalism is hastening us towards annihilation, though it may be hoped that God will save us.

CHAPTER V.

Historical setting.

Reference was made in last section to the accuracy as regards time and space in the writings of European thinkers. In our philosophical and historical writings the Purans, for instance, an extreme disregard is exhibited as to when and under what circumstances life was led by the people referred to. In the writings even of the greatest Hindu thinkers scant attention is paid to the idea of development in manners, customs, ideas and ideals. There are vague references to the four Yugas or eras, viz. Satya, Treta etc., but beyond this they don't care for any other division of time. Neither is there any tendency to examine the traditions and legends, if they are facts or fictions. There has been very little criticism based on the idea of evolution of language or progress of thought. The so-called "historical criticism" of the manners etc. is absent even to-day from the writings of most of our thinkers. The attitude of scientific or higher criticism is absolutely necessary for understanding truths but this seems to have been quite alien to our ancestral thinking. In the name of *Yogabal* (power of Yoga) they prove the truth and efficacy of several magical rites, ceremonies and miraculous performances. For

instance, in the *Life of Sankara* by a gentleman, who is a great Advaitavadin philosopher, Sankara is represented as addressing two meetings of Pandits at the same time at two distant places and silencing his opponents by his arguments at both meetings and this he did by the supernatural power acquired by Yoga. The whole *Life* covering 400 pages is filled with such accounts of miraculous performances. It is difficult to keep one's patience and to read the book through, and come to rational conclusions as to what happened in "the tour of victory" performed by Sankara. In my humble opinion this attitude of our good writers frustrates the very object they have in view, and instead of favourably impressing the reader, they produce somewhat contrary effects and even despair as to the future of the genuine Hindu culture.

In European literature also some Christian writers revel in recording the miracles performed by Jesus and saints of the mediaeval ages, but the greatest thinkers and historians are almost wholly free from this too credulous frame of mind. They also make guesses about the prehistoric history of the various races of mankind, but they try to be rational and true to facts. They are ready to revise their estimate of men and things in the light of facts newly discovered and therefore they write nothing to stand "*vabat chandra dibakaraui*" (as long as the sun and the moon endure). They emphasise the

revelation and inspiration of the Bible, no doubt, but this is a lesson they have learned from the east and they are revising this attitude as time is advancing. They are, most of them, open to conviction and are rarely dogmatic. Their interpretation of our Sastras is therefore often more rational and convincing than the orthodox interpretation. They place our writings in their historical setting and trace the gradual development, though the birth of geniuses cannot be wholly accounted for. Yet a Shakespeare or a Kalidas cannot be expected among the Hotentots of Africa, and therefore the critics of these two poets have to examine the historical backgrounds and the environments of these two poets in order to understand them properly. This historical sense is a great asset of the European mind. Hence they diligently write the histories of the aboriginal races of India and we read them with appreciation. This historical sense of the European mind has been strengthened and developed by the discovery of Darwin, whose book "The Origin of Species" came out in 1859, and has greatly helped the scientific investigation of this era. But the principle of historical criticism or the principle of growth as applicable to language, manners, laws etc. was discovered long ago by a lawyer of the Bologna University, who was a teacher of the Roman law and noticed the gradual development in the legal ideas of the Roman people. Has any Hindu lawyer with his modern education noticed any such

chronological development among the Smritis of the Rishis? This sort of criticism is being applied to our literature by Indologists and Orientalists, but we are mostly apathetic. Until we acquire an insight of this nature, we cannot hope to appraise our literature properly. We may indulge in hyperbolic praise of our Rishis, but the just valuation will not be attained. We mostly are just half-educated, acquainted with European view of things, but utterly ignorant of our own ideas and ideals. We shall understand our literature better, when we shall educate ourselves along the right lines, and acquire a fuller knowledge of our own things along with that of the European sciences, philosophies, etc.

The careful student will notice that in the biographies written in English, the authors always give as complete a picture of the social, political and other environments of the hero, so that the picture drawn may be seen in its proper perspective of the back-ground. A man or a woman is the product of the civilisation and the culture amidst which he or she is born and brought up. In the writings of our people often this background of the life is treated as absent and thus the happenings in the life of a great man are represented as miraculous and unaccountable. On the contrary, reason tells us that men, including great men, are born according to certain physical and moral laws and a good biographer tries to explain the life of his hero in the light of these laws and thereby clearly point

out the contribution made by his subject. A biography is to be a complete picture of the life painted and it cannot be complete unless it is shown in organic relation with its environment. Similarly in giving an account of the philosophical, religious, political development of a nation, the historical attitude is helpful. We understand a thing better, if we are enabled to see the sources from which it is derived. Hindu scholars, therefore, should try to appreciate our things in their historical setting. Our languages, literatures, philosophies, religions, etc. are as yet not properly intelligible, because of the absence of this historical criticism and historical study. In the writings of European thinkers, on the contrary, everywhere there is a critical and historical attitude. Their education is rationalising them, and they thus take more rational view of things. They welcome criticism and are never fanatical or dogmatic. In our country, most orthodox people, whether Hindu or Mahomedan, are not so rational in their writings and musings. They are impatient of criticism and often very dogmatic. We should imbibe this historical spirit from our modern education.

CHAPTER VI.

Regard for form.

Another thing that strikes the student of the European literature is its tendency to attach importance to form. The practicalness of the European mind that leads it to see things in their historical setting and evolution enables it also to see things in their proper place and form. When we read the novels of the modern writers, we are surprised to notice the minute descriptions of the dress and the surroundings of the characters introduced. The study of the environment of life in the histories written by them is wonderfully accurate and helpful in understanding the facts narrated. Already reference has been made to the school of Buckles, Taine and others of the nineteenth century, who attached the greatest importance to the geography of the country where a nation lived and other physical surroundings. This attitude is peculiarly their own. In our country so much attention was not paid to the external surroundings of life. *Desh* or space and *kala* or time had, no doubt, their importance with the Hindu thinkers, but they were mere categories or conditions (Upadhi) and not essential. Spirit was all in all to them and form had little meaning. Hindu civilisation being soul-centric and

not body-centric, their outlooks on life and things thus came to differ. Forms alter quickly and hence the rapidity in the changes in the European civilisation; the spirit does not change and hence the inertness and motionlessness in the life of the east. Tennyson, the representative or typical English man, therefore, rightly says:

"Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay." The Indian and Chinese civilisations are soul-centric and hence not eager to change the form. Europe, mindful of form, wants to make rapid changes. From the year 1789, the year of the French Revolution, what rapid changes are going on in the social and political organisations of Europe! But the spirit of man refuses to be changed. In our country, as we are under a European power, we are changing the forms and foolishly think that we can alter the spirit by changing the form, but the spirit does not change so rapidly. The conservativeness of the Hindu is therefore inborn and ingrained, because he knows that form may be changed, but not the spirit.

The various forms of democracy that are being so rapidly planned out in Europe prove the point clearly, *viz.* their attention is to form. In India there was not that anxiety to alter the form of government or social organisation, as they did not believe that by changing the form their lot might be improved. Man's happiness or misery they did not ascribe to others so much as to their own lot and *karma*. There is truth,

no doubt, in the form, but in the east, they have attached greater importance to spirit. Take, for instance, the theory of equality as worked out by the European nations. They want to establish equality in the eye of law and society and to give equal opportunities to all. They are working at this ideal, and have established Bal-shevism or Communism. This equality refers to the body, bodily happiness and comforts. It is a very good ideal, and has been very fascinating during the last two hundred years or so. All the European nations are trying to attain that ideal. We also are hankering after this ideal. In all our political, social and economical endeavours and efforts it is the slogan. We want to see an equality in the form of life established, so that we may not be pained by the glaring inequalities and injustices. Brahmins and pariahs must have equal opportunities and equal lot, if possible. The modern activities of mankind really are making for the establishment of this ideal. The author of the Gita, who may be considered as the best exponent of the Hindu conception puts his ideal of equality, which is absolutely spiritual, in the following words:—

विद्या विनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि

शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

(The learned and wise people see an equality among the learned Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, a *chandala* i.e. the same Brahman lives in all these. Hence the equality.)

The old Rishis believed that it was man's own deeds that caused their birth in different classes of society and the castes were created by God. Did not Goethe, the greatest German of the 19th century, conceive that there were different pairs of parents for the negroes and the white people of Europe? Do the present thinkers of Europe really believe all races of men as descended from the same stock? On the contrary, biology is proving differences of races and different origins. The Vedantic metaphysics, on the contrary, strongly and emphatically asserts the sameness of the human nature and all the deep religious teachings of the Hindus have been established on this equality. Along with the orthodox differences of castes, there is a deeper view of equality of all castes in the philosophical musings of our *sadhana*, otherwise Ramanuja could not have become the disciple of a Sudra. The equality that Buddha and Mahavir preached and practised was not denied by India. The sincere student will recognise the working of this principle in the mediaeval cults of Vaisnavism, Sikhism, and the cults of Dadu, Kavir and others. The equality that these saints practised was that of spirit and not of form. European thinking has not gone to the depth attained here even in the 6th and 7th century B.C. and remains on the surface of things, and hence the importance of form.

We shall be gainers by our acquaintance with the importance of form, as exhibited in the

European literature, provided we are not misled by it, so as to forget the importance of spirit or the essence of things. European civilisation has created a glamour for us which has blurred the vision of our people. It is necessary, therefore, to arrive at a correct estimate of the things we are anxious to own in imitation of our rulers. There is beauty and grace in their forms, but the spirit is lacking, and in that case it may not be really so attractive. For instance, the relation between the sexes. Their customs seem to be beautiful apparently, but the spirit of the relation between the husband and the wife is still more spiritual here. Shakespeare has clearly indicated his preference for this ideal in his Desdemona, Ophelia, Cordelia and Miranda, in whom the spirit of genuine love operates.

Thus our spiritual ideal is the same as theirs, yet their attention is more to the forms. When they also attend to the spirit, they discard the form. But the tendency of their civilisation is towards the form. At the present time, the importance they have begun to attach to race, nationality and other external and formal considerations will lead to tremendous clashes and collisions and may even jeopardise their civilisation. Their civilisation has become burdensome, expensive and complex, because of the importance of form. They cannot go on without exploiting other weaker races and robbing them of the fruits of their labours. They are a source of fear and trouble to other races and can

not be really helpful, though their missionaries pose as great friends of the ignorant and illiterate masses of India and China. Their ideals of comforts and happiness are not helpful to the growth of man's spiritual nature.

CHAPTER VII.

Freedom and Patriotism.

The greatest boon that we have derived from the education given to us by our rulers is the love of political freedom and the love of country, which has been a great current flowing in the writings and activities of the European nations since the days of Homer. The spirit that actuates the European powers for combination and unity in the League of Nations at Geneva was exhibited for the first time at the harbour of Aulis, where all the Greek heroes and their subjects assembled for the expedition against Troy under the leadership of Agamemnon, brother of king Menalaus whose wife Helen had been abducted by Paris, the son of the king of Troy. It was a combination that clearly indicated the attitude that Europe even now maintains towards Asia. It was a feeling of superiority and insult that they could ill brook from an Asiatic. Had Paris been a Greek, they would not have cared to combine in this way to avenge the wrong of Menalaus. They did not care for the chastity of the woman in the way in which the chastity of Sita has been made the subject of *the Ramayan*. It is on this ground that modern historians are not inclined to trace the Trojan war to the kidnapping of Helen. They think that it was a war of race

jealousy and trade-rivalry. The Greeks were an expansive people multiplying rapidly and they required space for their expansion; so they united to crush a rival power whose monopoly of the trade of the Black Sea was an obstacle in the path of their trade and colonisation. The Italian conquest of Abyssinia is equally an aggressive policy. So they united and destroyed the kingdom of Troy and colonised all the Asiatic Coasts, which we find in historical times entirely covered by the colonies of the Greeks. These colonials afterwards came to be subjugated by the king of Lydia and when the Lydian king Croesus was defeated by the Persian Emperor Darius, the Greeks became the subjects of the emperor of Persia.

This submission to an Asiatic power was extremely galling to the Greeks and so they broke out into a revolt and ultimately this revolt led to the burning of Sardis, the Capital of Lydia, by the Athenians. Darius, the Emperor of Persia, therefore, invaded Greece in 492 B.C. to punish the Athenians, but his generals were defeated by the Athenians at Marathon. This victory of Marathon is a matter of glory with European writers even now. At Marathon the Greek love of freedom was clearly demonstrated. The Athenian orators and poets were never tired of dwelling on the glory of this victory. Dr. Smith in his history of Greece remarks that the love of freedom was the strongest and deepest sentiment in the heart of a Greek citizen. Even

the smallest Greek state, which might be a mere village claimed to be perfectly free and independent. The two hundred states of historical Greece in ancient time might combine against the Asiatic invader, under the leadership of Sparta or Athens, but they could never submit to any permanent hegemony of even these Greek states, far less of foreigners. Their poetry, philosophy and art breathe a spirit of freedom. Pericles, the wisest politician and statesman, could not crush this spirit so as to combine them into one government as a means of defence against a foreign invader. Their love of freedom became the model for the Romans, who almost unconsciously imitated their ideals and developed this ideal of freedom under a better organisation. Their patriotism became more self-assertive and they combined the whole of Italy more successfully against the most powerful general of antiquity, viz., Hannibal. The tremendously prolonged war that they waged for about a hundred years (264 B.C. to 146 B.C.) for maintaining their freedom has lessons for all freedom-loving men even now. Their patriotism is exemplary to all modern readers of their history. All the European nations have imbibed this love of freedom and patriotism from the founders of their civilisation, the Greeks and the Romans. (The Teutonic races also were great-lovers of freedom). Both in Greece and Rome, every citizen, however high or low, had to fight and be ready to die in defence of their freedom.

The conscription that is in vogue among them now is really a legacy of Greece and Rome. The military supremacy of Europe that we see to-day is, no doubt, a heritage left to them by Alexander and Caesar. In India, fortunately or unfortunately, fighting came to be the duties of one caste alone, whereas the majority of men were non-combatants, though in the early days, perhaps, every one among the Aryans also had to fight. But there is little record of the wars they waged against the non-Aryans, though scholars now discover traces of some history in the Rig Veda. The caste system began to develop here from the earliest time and the undisputed superiority of the Aryans did not require every man to fight. The spiritual civilisation which the Aryans developed here was greatly helped by the division of labour that caste defined and enjoined.

If we free our mind from the abuses of caste, such as untouchability and monopolisation of learning by the Brahmins, and also of the misrepresentation of its effects by European writers, and carefully try to understand the Hindu system of thought, we shall see that this much-abused system has been more favourable than the equality of European brand, to the moral and spiritual welfare of man. The equality of the modern type creates a restlessness and a spirit of competition and a selfishness, whereas the caste provided some employment to every one and the

simple life of the people here could be maintained in comfort. Here the kings were not so oppressive and predatory as they were in ancient Greece or Rome. A careful perusal of the history of the regal period in the Greek and Roman history leaves no doubt that the people there were goaded into asserting their freedom. Thus their bad kings became their greatest benefactors. It is undeniable, however, that the way in which caste was developed and the political system under kingship was worked, crushed the spirit of freedom and arrested the growth of individuality both in men and women. The religious system of thought, again, bound the members of a family including the dead in an indissoluble bond. The wife was literally a sharer in the spiritual boon with her husband. The son might injure or benefit the fathers spiritually by his conduct. Therefore an independent individuality that Socrates taught for the moral independence of a son could not be thought of here. In Greece politically the family had been, before Socrates' time, a unit and every man was a limb of the State. Citizens were to subordinate their interests to the welfare of the state, but this was an earthly concern and so when Greece began to lose the political independence, there was no bond to bind the individual with the family. Thus the individuality of every man came to be conceived and developed. Socrates became the founder of the science of ethics which based its truth on the freedom of the will of the individual.

The Spirit or the Demon of Socrates to whisper what he was not to do, has been, at the hand of the Christian teachers, given a positive character in the command of conscience as to what should be done. This sovereignty of the individual has completed the ethical freedom of man in Europe, where they have established their political systems in harmony with this spirit of freedom. Their family organisation, their state and labour organisations, in short, every sphere of the human life has come to be built on the freedom of the man and the woman.

Our religious beliefs are, on the other hand, against the tendencies that we are imbibing from the study of European ethics, philosophy, history, politics and other cultural subjects. The science of biology also supports their individualism by emphasising the principle of self-preservation, and this self is the bodily or the physical self of every human being. In the Hindu system of thinking, the spiritual welfare and the life of the soul being a more important factor, the interest of the individual as identified with the body and his freedom could not acquire this European importance. The individual, therefore, did not require this sort of freedom. Nay, the Buddhist teachers created the conception of a spiritual world, "Dhammakaya," where all human beings, dead and living, were considered as sharers and partners, organically related with each other, so that the virtue and the vice of one affected the welfare of all for

the better or for the worse. The crass individuality that separates the spiritual or moral good of the husband from that of the wife, or of the son from that of the parents was never thought of in the Hindu system. The son here was considered to be under an obligation to pay the debt of the father. The false deposition by a son before a court would cause the spiritual downfall of his dead ancestors. Thus the relation of blood was divinised and spiritualised by the Hindu. The essence of Hindu ethics lies not in the assertion of the freedom of the will-power, but in subduing the passions for which every man has been given the strength. Hindu psychology taught people here the supremacy of the mind over the senses and the mind was regarded as capable of being controlled and held in restraint. Mere boys were taught:

आपद्ः कथितः पन्था इन्द्रियानामसंयमः

तज्जय सम्पदां मार्गः येनेह तेन गम्यताम् ॥

(Giving a loose reign to the senses has been called the path to ruin, but holding them under check the path to good fortune. You are free to adopt the path you like). Thus the moral freedom of man was regarded as a matter of course. No quarrelling or disputing whether man was free to do the right ever took place here. The teachers believed in certain inherited tendencies, as the result of one's deeds of previous births, but they also might be transformed

by the better life and discipline in the present birth or even more births than one that might be required for this purpose: so the Gita says:

भोक्तुं जन्म संसिद्धस्ततः याति परां गतिं ॥ (One attains perfection by passing through more births than one). They believed that one might acquire better opportunities by being born under better circumstances. The rewards of better work one will reap through future incarnations. He may not be blessed with the fruits of his good work in this life, yet he should exert himself as he will surely enjoy the fruit of his good work in future. Is not this a better prospect for the virtuous, who, often, are militated against in this life? Socrates is poisoned by the Athenians in this world, but Socrates will get his reward surely, says the Hindu. Christian fathers created the conception of purgatory for the purification of sinners and the Hindus believed in re-births. One who was born once but was not liberated from his propensities and desires was bound to be born again and work out his salvation by good deeds. There is more of self-reliance in this scheme of salvation, though intervention by great souls, through mercy, by becoming Guru and Guide was not unacceptable. The Hindu scheme of salvation is not a narrow method. There are very many methods. In fact there is much more spiritual freedom for the Hindu than under any other system. The much-vaunted and exaggerated love of freedom of the Christian nations and

countries is shown to be chimerical and unreal, when a King like Edward VIII has abdicated, though he does no ethical wrong, but he wounds the vanity of the British conservative section. Can the British King assert his spiritual freedom and declare himself to be a nonprotestant and retain the crown? What then is the value of this freedom of the individual of which Europe is proud? The Hindu so long as he lived in society did not demand this sort of freedom, but in the third and the fourth stage he was allowed absolute freedom. Hindu teachers believed in the need of subordinating the passions and emotions, and never preached an individuality like that of Socrates or his disciples, the ethical philosophers of today. They emphasised the need of discipline and obedience in the first two stages of life, and Hindu life flowed in these channels till very recently. The so-called uneducated people of India have to mould themselves even now according to this discipline and are often morally better and simpler than the hybrid products of modern education. The moral and spiritual calmness in Hindu India is still a matter of surprise. The troubles are due to the half-educated degree-holders of to-day. We these degree-holders have to revise our estimate and valuation of things and adapt the European ideals to our old traditional beliefs. The degree-holding upper classes and castes have no justification for placing themselves over the heads of other castes, because the claim of spiri-

tual superiority is no longer maintainable. The former Brahmins and Kshatriyas were not of this type. They really were servants to society and it was by their service that they deserved higher places. The rulers and upper sections have not that justification any more. It is the justification of brute force, and not of spiritual service.

The ideal of political freedom and of the love of country has done some good to us, the down-trodden people. It has levelled us all down and it may be hoped that in course of time a unity may be developed, in which all able-bodied men will get the same opportunities for fighting and working for the country. But it is yet a hope and an ideal. The foreigners who are holding us down will not easily give up their grip and treat us as their equals. Their European morality knows no such universalism, though they talk of it. Here the Hindu teachers postponed equality to future births for the Sudra, and the Europeans now postpone it to future descendants of the present generations, who are not sufficiently enlightened. The ultimate results of both pleas are the same, *viz.*, denials of equality, though the Hindu teachers were more sincere. The corruptions that we see going on around us among our educated people who have received their lessons from the European teachers cause a despair as regards the future, because a country can hardly be expected to improve on the working of such selfish principles. Nowhere

has the progress of man been possible on the methods followed now. The selfish principles of individuality and nationality are causing great troubles in Europe itself where democracy is in a fix and we are going to work out the same principles and have improved upon their methods. The corruptions and quarrels in the election campaigns of the present time fill us with trembling and fear as to the future of this land. Honesty, truthfulness, justice and other similar virtues are now considered as the ideals for fools and idiots and our clever and wise leaders are copying the European methods and God alone knows where we are being led by them.

The European love of freedom has powerfully influenced their literature; nay their literature has little worth if we subtract this love of freedom from it. The great writers of England whom we love and honour were all strong advocates of freedom. Shakespeare, Milton, Burke, Bacon, and others were all great champions of the freedom of the individual. Historians unanimously say that when England defeated the Armada and became glorious in the eye of Europe, their literature attained the greatest development. The Elizabethan literature which is compared with the Athenian literature of the fifth century B. C. and with that of the Augustan Age of ancient Rome owed its juvenance to the spirit of religious freedom introduced by the Reformation and the fervour of patriotism consequent upon the defeat of the greatest political

power of the day, *viz.* the power of the Emperor of Spain, Philip II, who was compared with a colossus standing with one leg in the old world and the other in the new. Freedom has thus supplied the greatest inspiration to the European writers. Religious freedom, no doubt, had a large share in her literature, but religion never filled up the life of the European in the way it did in India.

The church organisation of Europe built up under the guidance of the discipline-loving Roman Popes allowed little freedom of worship and hence freedom-loving people had to protest against the Pope's authority. The Teutonic peoples of Northern Europe thus became Protestants, but their protestantism was not thoroughgoing; they could not give absolute freedom to the worshipper, and compelled all to accept their new organisation. Form-loving Europe could not believe that all forms might be discarded and yet spiritual life would not suffer. Roman discipline still maintains and insists upon church-organisation. But the spirit of freedom which is ingrained in the nature of every man is asserting itself in religion also, as it has been doing in other spheres of life.

The greatest European movement of freedom was the French Revolution of 1789. It has been moulding the civilisation of mankind in all the spheres of human activity during the last one hundred and fifty years. It has built the

democracies of Europe and the nations also. It is moulding the family life and political constitutions of all countries. We in India also are working out the ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in all our activities. The labour movement of the day is a necessary corollary of the French Movement. Perhaps the time has not yet come to assess the value of this Revolution. Since the introduction of Christianity in the Roman world in the fifth century A.D., there has not been another movement like the French Revolution, influencing the whole of our life.

This freedom movement becoming combined with the intellectual progress of the nineteenth century has produced the modernity of which we are so proud. All the nations are working out these ideals with the help of science. The labourers of the 20th century will utilise science for the purpose of establishing their equality with capitalists and men of rank. This will be a sort of perfection in the human organisation, but the canker of unbelief is eating into the vitals of all organisations and God alone knows whereto the world is drifting.

The equality established by the program of Rousseau may make the life of the body happy and even free from want and yet it will not enable mankind to attain the peace that the soul of man yearns for. The perfection in the environment of life is so exacting and requires so much exertion that it leaves little time for

attending to spiritual interests of the soul.* Those people who have attained perfection in the environment of their lives betray an utter lack of inward happiness. Their regret convinces us that the progressive movements which absorb and monopolise our efforts are not all right. The ideals of equality and freedom will not lead us to true equanimity or spiritual equilibrium, which alone can give peace to the soul of man. These western ideals are ideals of self-assertion and not of self-effacement or surrender and man has been so made by God that he cannot get full peace until he has learned to surrender his own happiness for that of another. Here is the failure of the European equality. This equality kills the spirit of love and service for each other which alone can give peace and happiness. The equality that our Buddhists and mediaeval saints preached and practised and that appeals to the soul, is not that of the French Revolution. It is rather of the brand that has been alluded to already by quoting the Gita. The equality between the man and the woman, for instance, that the law now maintains and enforces and that is the ideal of the modern education, cannot give real happiness to a married couple, who will prefer to surrender their selves to each other and sweeten their lives by

* The European civilisation is too expensive and leaves little rest for higher thinking. A man can hardly maintain himself by his own labour. Hence he has to rob others. Thus the wars and the imperialism that we are suffering from.

service and love. The legality and legalised equality that exercises so much fascination over the youthful mind and that is the slogan of modern time cannot give full satisfaction to the human soul. It is more or less for the body and the body is a very negligible part of man. As I have already indicated that the civilisation of Europe has been growing with the body as the centre of its thought and activity, it cannot give full satisfaction to the soul. The soul is being neglected and relegated to the corner in the thought system of modern time. Doctors now treat their human patients as mere animals made up of a body of flesh and blood, whereas our old physicians still consider man as a soul. The mechanical methods followed by the doctors often fail in directing them to the correct diagnosis of a disease. Their clinical researches prove abortive and the patient dies before they can find out what the cause of the trouble is. Our physicians, when they have properly learned their trade, can diagnose the disease by feeling the pulse which gives them the right clues. The view that man is an animal like other animals may be scientific, but not perfect truth. European theories of equality and liberty, similarly, are partial truths. They cannot give perfect happiness and lead us to peace. Europe has become restless and bellicose by adopting the program of equality among all men. Love has been destroyed by this equality.

CHAPTER VIII.

Freedom in love.

The individuality founded by Socrates and developed by Christian teaching and modern ethical writers has manifested itself in the independence of the woman, so that no marriage in England now takes place by negotiation, excepting in the case of aristocrats and rulers, who are anxious for alliance of convenience and profit. Among the ancient Greeks and the Romans, whose family organisation resembled the Hindu organisation, there was little freedom for the woman. The family was patriarchal and women were *given in marriage* by the parents. Women remained confined to the domestic circle and took no part in the politics of the day. They occupied the same legal position with the slaves and could be bought and sold by their husbands. They were a sort of chattels and even princesses, when taken captives, were treated as slaves. The woman had little sanctity. Nay, she was represented by Christian writers as a snare and a temptation, being a daughter of Eve. Jewish writers believed the woman had no soul, as Eve was made out of a rib of Adam into whom alone God breathed the breath of life. Miss Mayo, had she been properly educated in the antiquities of the civilisation of her race, would not have

been so rash as to condemn the Hindu civilisation on the ground of the maltreatment of the wife. The Teutonic people alone as Tacitus, the Roman historian, has noted in his book "Germanicus" used to court the woman before marriage. The Teutons, uncivilised though they were, as compared with the Romans of the first century, were a freedom-loving people. They had more respect and consideration for the woman. Hence love-poetry has more been fashionable among the Teutonic races of northern Europe. Among the Greeks as also among the Romans there was little love poetry. Love among them, as among the Hindus, was post-nuptial, rather than ante-nuptial. Helen and Paris, as presented by Homer, were not in romantic love with each other, being as they were mere pawns in the hands of the gods. Neither is the love between Hector and Andromache, though perfectly chaste and beautiful, romantic or maddening. It is pure, calm and deep like that of Sita for Rama and as such represents the Asiatic ideal of the devotion of the wife, who idealises her relation into a religion. Really love, whether domestic or romantic, is deepened by the woman into her religion and acquires a fervour and strength at her hand far surpassing that of the man. Shelley, therefore, rightly wonders, why 'love makes the frail woman's breast his cradle'. But love poetry was written much, neither among the Greeks nor among the Romans. The Greeks ex-

celled in the drama and the epic and the Romans in satire and didactic poetry.

St. Paul, following the Jewish traditions and the Gentile customs of his time, insists on the subordination of the wife (see Ephe, V 23-24) to the husband, and when Milton wrote his "Pamphlets on Divorce," he pleaded for a freedom not required by others. The grounds on which he demanded the dissolution of the sacred tie did not appeal to the public of his time. Really the individuality that Socrates had taught had not as yet been considered as a necessity or privilege for the woman. The ideal of chivalry and the woman-worship of the Middle Ages was not, in fact, of Christian origin. Hallam, in his "Literature of the Middle Ages," insists that the ideal of chivalry and knightly love is of European origin, as the Teutonic races of the north had been, from time beyond memory, respectful to the weaker sex and been in the habit of courting the woman. There are other writers, however, who hold that the knightly ideal of chivalry and chastity was of eastern origin due to the influence of the Saracenic conquerors of Europe and the contact of the Christian warriors with the east during the centuries of the crusade. The refined and delicate relations that the chivalric ideal and attitude presents to us were of oriental origin and unknown in Europe. The Troubadour poets of France who wrote the love lyrics for the first time and Petrarch who wrote his sonnets in celebration of his love for Laura were indebted

for their refinement and fervour to the new literature of the East. The sonnet, it is said, was modelled on the Gazzal of the Arabic poetry and the fervour that the new love poetry of these poets breathed was something quite new. This refinement was unknown in Europe. Chaucer got it from his Italian and French masters and depicted the love of Palaman and Arcite in his *Knight's Tale*. There was no love poetry among the Saxon writers, who wrote religious poetry, and martial or epic songs. Love poetry requires an advancement in civilisation and culture and does not flourish among people who lead predatory life. The Saxon people, who were pirates and led an unsettled life till they were settled in Britain and became Christians, were incapable of any love poetry. Their *Beowulf* is an epic rather, in which their warlike proclivities are beautifully depicted.

Christian morality and the mediaeval spirit of renunciation as represented by the movements of St. Francis and St. Dominic did not favour the growth of love poetry and the freedom of the woman. It was the Italian Renaissance of the 15th Century that introduced an ideal of life favourable to the freedom on which love and poetry grew. But for the worldlymindedness of the Italian patrons of the new spirit of culture, viz., the Medicis of Florence, the development of the modern spirit of the sixteenth century would not have been possible. Religion, specially of the type of Christianity, does not give freedom to

man. It always tends towards discipline and restraint. Love and its ideal, on the contrary, demand a freedom and therefore Europe felt a new glow in her life from the Renaissance-movement of the sixteenth century that gave a new outlook on life. The trammels of the mediaeval theology were gone and the reign of common sense began. This intellectual freedom was soon after combined with a spiritual freedom of the Reformation, which completed the gamut of European conception of freedom.

Really sincere love poetry began to be written, when life became lively and free, and this juvenation of Europe began in the sixteenth century. The mediaeval idealisation of the woman by the chivalrous knight was rather a matter of poetry and fancy than an actuality, and this also was partly due to the earlier Renaissance of the 13th century. When the story of the knights of the Round Table was compiled by Malory in his *Morte D' Arthur*, the warrior's devotion to the lady-love and fidelity to her was a matter of an ideal state of things. Spencer in his *Faerie Queene* spiritualised this ideal, by basing it on Christian ethics and Platonic conception of love between souls. Spencer along with Sir Philip Sydney is a founder of the love-poetry of England. The English people with the Teutonic blood in their veins have been characterised by a love of freedom in all the spheres of life and this freedom has enabled them to allow more freedom to their

women. The woman has enjoyed among them a freedom since the remote antiquity and it has been disciplined and developed under the fostering restraint of Christianity. In their poets, therefore, *e.g.*, in Shakespeare of the 16th century, we find a lofty purity combined with this freedom. In Shakespeare's best heroines love asserts its freedom from the bonds of social conventions, but is completely moral and pure. In the English literature, poetry dealing with love of the country and love between the man and the woman, is a priceless treasure, unparalleled by the poetry of any other nation.

This English freedom is a beautiful thing in its operation, because it is regulated and harmonised with life. Love leads there to the domestic restraint and founds society. The free love that people now-a-days talk of cannot appeal to the English people, who know how freedom acts beautifully under regulations. Love among them is thus based on sympathy between the lover and the beloved, and this sympathy is matured by marriage and religion. Yet as freedom is the essence of true love, it often defies the conventions of the society and is troubled.

In the east and among the people of India love has been post-nuptial and poets depict the devotion of wives like Sita, Damayanti and others. Though girls were often allowed to grow to maidenhood and woman-hood before they were married, yet they were not given the free-

dom for mixing with young men that is necessary for the development of love. In our classical literature, only among the warrior caste, we see certain freedom was given to a maiden in selecting her bridegroom by the custom of Swayambara. But this seems to have been resorted to by famous heroines who became reputed for their beauty and virtue. King Janaka and King Drupada seem to have acted as they did, because they considered their daughters exceptionally meritorious to deserve the best heroes for their husbands. Hence they required their would-be sons-in-law to prove by some tests their excellence as warriors. Among the Brahmins and other castes, we do not read of any such freedom being given to the maiden, yet love was fostered by the sanction religion gave to marriage. The eroticism in the Sanskrit literature that strikes the foreign student is of later development, when a degeneration had taken place in the religious beliefs of certain sections of people. Human nature everywhere has demanded a freedom in the matter of love, but as in the orthodox organisation of the society of the Hindus, there was no room for the exercise of free choice, aberrations took place and poets fattened their imagination on these aberrations. The Rishis, who realised the need of the satisfaction of desires (It is one of the fourfold purposes of life), developed a science (see the *Kama sastra* of Vatsayana) and arrived at certain generalisations by following which one might get the best

enjoyment of love within the bounds of matrimony. They could not believe that a man might be happy by unrestrained love. But along with the growth of the community, the influence of wealth and position came to be applied by people and immorality and vice multiplied. pleasure-loving rich people, therefore, did not care for the restraints of morality and virtue and there were poets also to describe and delineate the illicit love affairs of some people. It seems to me that this degeneration followed the time of Buddha and Mahavir whose followers led celibate lives and lived in large numbers in the monasteries. Large number of men and women remained unmarried and this led to a corruption in course of time.

The eroticism of the Krishna cult and of the Tantrikas is not in accordance with the Sastras of the Rishis and is one of the potent causes of the degeneration of the people of India since the 8th century A. C. The ideals that constitute the central truths of these cults are very difficult of attainment by ordinary human beings and hence have followed corruptions. The eroticism of the mediaeval cults of Dadu, Kavir and other unorthodox religious teachers, however, is based on a philosophy which may be traced to the teachers of the Upanishads, who discovered the eternal relationship and bond existing between Jiba and Brahman. This dualism and the permanent relation has been a fruitful ground in

all religious cults of love beginning with Yajna-
valkya, who, though denying dualism, believed
in a love between the soul of each person and the
soul of the universe. This cult of love, there-
fore though of Vaidik origin, has been better
developed at the hands of the saints of the
middle ages. It may be that the cult of Suphism
which is Vedantic also made some contribution
towards this development. The cults of love
better develop on the soil of the conception of
duality than of unity as the basis of creation.
This duality is very popular in India among
the masses. Hence in the Indian literature a
foreigner will meet with a lofty conception of
souls in love with God and at the same time with
the exhibition of immoral and illicit loves. There
is little of this sort of spiritual love that we meet
with in India in the poetry of Burns, Shelley or
Byron. They do not rise to the height of love
between the human soul and God. Human love
has been beautifully developed by them.

It should be noted, however, that in English
it is rare to find the love that rises to the highest
level in our religious literature. Some catholic
saints, specially female saints, are described as
being inspired with a love like that of Radha,
but this is rather an exception and may be of the
east. The Platonic conception of love between
souls, specially between the human soul and the
soul of the universe, was not a popular cult. It
might have influenced some philosophical
thinkers here and there, but in India this cult,

inspite of its abuse, has gone down to the masses and the Bauls of Bengal sing of this highest sort of love. They will surprise the teachers of the highest philosophy by the homely way in which they will describe this longing love of the human soul for the Divine soul. The immoralities of the Sahajia cult of Bengal have repelled our educated people, no doubt, yet there are simple saints here and there who by their earnest pursuit of God put us and our education to shame.

Another point in this connection that should be noted is this. The emotional life of the people of India is quite different from that of the people of Europe. The historical development in India has proceeded on different lines from those followed in Europe. The materialism of Europe is old and traditional. Her conception of property and the laws of property have been quite different. The Romans were most anxious for guarding their property and the geography of their country has made them hardy, enterprising and adventurous. The environment of their life has made them more solicitous about the comfort of this life. These points have been already touched upon. Here it need be added that the play of the heart has thus been a different thing here. The moderation that is generated by the practical attitude of the European people is wanting here. We do not care for the Aristotelian golden mean, specially in the pursuit of religion, and therefore our devotees go to the extreme. The maddening love of Gourango is

not a thing to be found in any European Bhakta. The European Bhakta often like St. Francis or Dominic goes to work among the people and organises orders of monks. Our Vaisnavas or Saktas or Sikhs have not worked on these lines among the poor. Even now there are great religious teachers in India, but they are not anxious for this sort of philanthropic work. It is the Brahmo Samaj which following Christian missionaries began to do philanthropic work and the Ramkrishna Mission of Swami Vivekananda, formerly a member of the Brahmo Samaj, is working on the lines of Christian missionaries. Our religious emotion leads us to inactivity and meditation and this we require to be modified. But it is difficult to alter the tendencies of centuries. Our present education, when it will be deepened, may produce a better result in future. But at present it has made us more selfish than our teachers, i.e. our rulers. They are more patriotic and less selfish than ourselves.

We are trying to introduce the freedom they cherish in all the departments of our lives, but the results are beyond our ken. Some of the results that we are experiencing are not very encouraging, because our education has caused a loss of our own ideals, but not established in our life the ideals of our teachers. In our current literature we are trying to have an ideal of love and freedom like theirs, but it is against our tradition and inherent tendencies. Our education along with the economical change have

introduced certain unavoidable alterations in our family life and social organisations, and these are regretted by all, but nobody knows any remedy for their redress. We are blindly imitating our rulers and though our economical condition is much worse than theirs, we are aping their expensive and complex mode of life and costly standard of living. There are very few who think on these points clearly and give the direction we need. We are anxious for political, religious and social freedom and cherish the ideals of the European nations. Our education holds up before us these ideals and we do not care to see what the ideals of our fathers were. This loss of ideals is a danger that remains unnoticed by our leaders and thinkers. The teachers of our old literature do not understand our present need and are unpractical *pundits*, repeating the old Sastras but unable to harmonise them with the present life. The so-called educated people also like these *pundits* are ignorant of our own ideals. Thus both classes are half-educated and consequently fail to guide us aright.

CHAPTER IX.

The Supernatural.

In ancient times everywhere people believed in the interference of the gods in the affairs of men. The Bible narrates the story of the creation and God's dealings with the Jews so vividly that even now most people in Europe believe what is recorded in the *Pentateuch* as actual facts. Facts and fictions are mingled in the writings of the prophets of the Jews. Our Purans, also, in the same way, mix up facts with myths and common people consider such marractions as history. The possible and the impossible are treated in the same sublime and serious manner, as Swift tells the story of his voyages to Lilliput and other imaginary lands to children, without moving any of his risible muscles. The difference between Swift and the author of the Genesis is that the former knows what absurdity he is recording, whereas the latter is quite innocent of the untruth he is stating so seriously. The childlike simplicity of the Biblical narrators has appealed to the child in every man and woman.

When with the development of the reasoning power in man, the Homeric presentation of gods became impossible and yet the belief in the unseen powers remained intact and the idea of

man's ethical freedom became clearer, the idea of occasional interference continued, and thus writers like Aeschylus and Sophocles present pictures of miraculous happenings taking place unaccountably through the interference of gods. At the hand of Euripides, who was more rational and sceptical about the gods, the ethical responsibility of man finds better expression. The metaphysics of the time not enabling them fully to understand the relation between matter and spirit, the presentation of the spiritual element in literature was involved in obscurity. The belief of Euripides was rational but it was a sort of pantheism. The philosophy of Plato that has influenced deeper thinking since his time was not popular and hence the supernatural element in the Greek literature did not rise above the wrong popular beliefs of the time. The gods gave them directions at the shrine of Delphi and without consulting this oracle they undertook no business.

The Romans like the Greeks worshipped many gods and believed in the direct intervention by them in the affairs of men. At the battle of Lake Regilus, where the forces of the expelled tyrant, Tarquinius Superbus, helped by the Latins, were defeated by the Romans, it was believed that Castor and Pollux, two gods worshipped by them, fought on their side to ensure victory to them. Their priests, the augurs, frequently consulted the wishes of the gods by examining the entrails of the birds

offered as sacrifices to them. The popular beliefs of the Greeks and the Romans were of the same nature as the popular belief among us. The gods were not bound by the limitations of time and place and could assume any shape and act in any manner to help their votaries. With the progress of enlightenment this belief became eliminated and materialistic causality came to be believed in by the enlightened among them. From the 1st century B. C. to the 5th century A.D. very few enlightened people among the Greeks and the Romans had any faith in their national gods, though the great stoics, such as, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus believed in a future life and considered the soul of man as immortal. The vulgar mass went on worshipping the former gods, though they had no assured faith in any of them. The Roman emperors also were worshipped as gods, and some of them encouraged the popular beliefs and superstitions, as they supported the despotism of the government which resembled the despotism of their Chief God, Jupiter. Religion was a part of the state machinery and government organised shows and the celebrations of the festivals to teach loyalty and to make the mass of people submissive. As the newly made Christians among their subjects could take no part in these religious festivals, they having no faith in these heathen gods, they were persecuted. Floods, famines, plagues that troubled the Romans were ascribed by the vulgar mass to the irreligion of

the Christians, who did not join in the public worship and Nero who burned Rome imputed his own crimes to the Christians, whom he ruthlessly burnt as torches to please the mob. The Christians in the Roman empire were thus subjected to endless troubles and had to practise their religion and perform religious exercises often secretly in underground cells.

When Christianity became the state religion under Constantine the Great, in the 5th century, it did not at once put an end to all superstitious beliefs prevailing among the masses. Christianity rather created other superstitions in addition to those of the heathen people. The Christian teachers began to represent the heathen gods as the evil angels who had rebelled against God and been driven to hell along with Lucifer or Satan. The Christian fathers, again, thus created many saints to help people miraculously and the evil angels to frustrate them. Thus the superstitious beliefs of the people became more complex and more firmly rooted. The Jews also had many superstitions as to the Gods of other races, the Gentiles, whose false gods were not non-existent altogether, but were malicious and wicked in nature. The dualistic metaphysics that was the basis of these beliefs could not dismiss out of existence good and evil angels. Dante, Milton and other christian writers have given them permanence and dignity in the art of Europe. The evil spirits are so real even now that Luther is said to have fought with the Devil and most people

believe it to be true. To a man of science, *e.g.* Huxley, the story of the Devil entering the body of a herd of swine may be absurd, but to the majority of Christians including the educated, it is an actual fact. Hence it has been said that superstitions die hard.

We have many such stories in our popular tales. Even the Purans are not free from such beliefs. As there are good gods, there are malicious ones. The goddess of Cholera or small-pox, another goddess called Banadurga are popularly believed in Bengal as inimical and malicious against mankind. They have to be propitiated with offerings of certain kind.

When the Christian legends and miracles of saints were dramatised in the early centuries of the mediaeval era, the angels, good and bad, found a large place in them. Even God the father was introduced. The Devil and Vice figured largely in them. In the allegories like those of Spenser in the *Faerie Queene*, abstract virtues and vices received bodies and were invested with supernatural powers. Allegories acquired a great vogue in the thinking of Europe and at the hands of religious and moral teachers have been utilised very widely for the edification of people. A species of drama called the moral plays was invented, when the dramatists had exhausted the mysteries of Christianity and the miraculous tales of saints. The supernatural element had a great importance in these religious and moral writings and representations. Thus

facts and fictions were blended to minister unto man's moral and religious needs. It was a mixture of the natural and the supernatural. To one who sees the finite in the infinite, no superstitious machinery is needed. He will present the commonplace in such a way as to appeal to the highest imagination. In our Tagore poet, the things of nature are shown as symbols of the Infinite, whereas in very few English poets, we meet with this presentation. Wordsworth and Blake, however, see the finite as existing in the Infinite. To Wordsworth the "Meanest flower that blows gives thoughts that lie too deep for tears." To Blake the "Tiger" is a miracle.

The dualistic philosophy of Christianity has created Satan and his followers, the fallen angels. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a typical picture of the mixture of the natural and the supernatural. The best method for European poets is to allegorise. Milton's allegory of Sin and Death in the second book of *Paradise Lost* or Spencer's allegories in the *Faerie Queene* are of the same type. They know no other method, besides this and the popular superstitions of ghosts, fairies or spirits and demons. Shakespeare has introduced ghosts in his *Hamlet*, witches in *Macbeth*, and fairies in *Midsummer-night's Dream*. These creations are those of popular superstition and due to the dualistic metaphysic current in the popular mind. He utilises them for his own purpose of poetising and helping on the action of his play. Seneca whose tragedies were the models

for the tragedies of the English dramatists has introduced ghosts in some of his plays and thus set the fashion. The Greek Tragedians had no ghosts in their plays. The introduction of the supernatural element in the early dramatic literature of the 14th and 15th centuries was a matter of course. When the regular drama was developed in the 16th century, even then the belief in angels, the Devil and other such agencies was in full swing. The introduction of the supernatural created no jar. Milton writing in the seventeenth century could not have disbelieved the Biblical story that is the frame work of his poem and his presentation also must now be considered as superstitious or mythical at best. *Paradise Lost* is not an allegory but an epic and like Homer's epic the *Iliad* based on certain supernatural happenings. His *Paradise Regained* also must be considered as a religious narrative based on the story of the Gospels and as such a mixture of natural and supernatural elements. Can we believe in Satan as an actual personality, though orthodox Christians may believe in his existence? The mythical nature of Christ's personality and his life history makes this mixture unavoidable, and the absence of the realisation of a clearer metaphysics of unity in the European writers makes their presentation of the supernatural element mostly crude and a matter of credulity. Their most successful method is to allegorise. They very rarely rise to the height in which the finite or the natural is shown as

existing in the Infinite, though there are exceptions. In certain writers alone, as said before, such as, Blake and Wordsworth, we come across, now and then, the presentation of the common-places as in and through the Infinite. Among prose writers only in Emerson and Carlyle the Limitless is hinted at in the limited. Coleridge gets glimpses of the Infinite now and then, but he also had not realised the Infinite like our Tagore poet, so as to speak of the ordinary things and present them as invested with the phantasmagoria of the Infinite. In his "Ancient Mariner," he introduces the supernatural and has to utilise the creations of popular superstition, *viz.* spirits, fairies, ghosts, etc.

The introduction of the supernatural element without realising fully what is natural and the relation between the finite and the Infinite, will necessarily be crude and superstitious, at best, and my humble opinion is that in all European writers since the days of Homer the presentation of the supernatural has been either mythical, superstitious and crude and only when allegorical, it is agreeable. You cannot show the magnificent beauty of the supernatural, unless you have realised clearly the setting of the finite or natural things. Those poets who are sincerely religious and realise the omnipresence of God and see things in him, become agreeable by that clear realisation. Shelley alone among the English poets takes the highest flight, because he by reading Plato and other Greek writers had

got a clear notion of the Infinite and often saw things in their correct perspective. His *Alastor*, *The Witch of Atlas*, and *Prometheus Unbound* indicate how he saw the finite and how the supernatural was blended in him with the natural. Keats' in his *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *Endymion* indicates his conception of the relation of the two, the natural and the supernatural and his presentation also is mythical. Unless a man sees the limitations of the finite, he cannot rise to the height of the Limitless. The philosophy of dualism cannot enable us to do this properly.

In this scientific age therefore, mythical, superstitious and allegorical representation of the supernatural being not in order, only the philosophical enjoys credit. Hence the circle of the readers of Shelley, Wordsworth and Blake, Browning, Emerson will go on widening as enlightenment progresses. Robindranath Tagore whose presentation of truth is always and invariably in the highest metaphysics of the Infinite derived from his father, a Maharshi, is getting admirers in all parts of the enlightened world. When a sincerely religious man writes of things, he practically rises to the infinite of God and thus leaves the popular and mythical way of looking at things behind. The allegorical method has proved most successful for moral edification of man and hence has some value, but it proves tiresome when much prolonged. The brief fable or parable is, therefore, more agreeable and if

clearly interpreted appeals to the reader. There is nothing surpassing the parables of Jesus in the Bible or the fables of Aesop.

Religious poets, such as, Tennyson and others believing all things as existing in God, in whom we live, move and have our being, impart a supernatural meaning to the things of nature. To Tennyson's Arthur in his "Holy Grail" visions appear in the midst of the experiences of daily life. To his Gallahad such visions are more steady and permanent. Coleridge's ancient mariner is seized with an unnatural fit by the fervour of his penitence and the confession of his sin soothes his heart and he becomes normal and natural. The modern philosophy of unity accepted by the rationalists of the present time has made almost all truth-seekers mystics. In the unitarian section of christian devotees many exhibit the Infinite in the finite. Amiel says "God sees through my eyes." Goethe and other great thinkers feel no difficulty in realising the unity underlying the diversity of the creation and thus have attained the highest flight of human imagination.

Goethe in his "Faust" uses the mythical and allegorical imageries, no doubt, yet he has his firm footing on the *t'irra firma* of unity among things. It may, therefore, be hoped that as man will advance in realising the Unity that creates the manifold, he will get rid of the traditional myths by creating certain symbols which serve as the

vehicle of his thoughts. The characters and images created by a great poet are the symbols or the myths, *i.e.*, the supernatural elements, which he gives expression to his ideas and ideals.

CHAPTER X.

The ideal of Chivalry.

The ideal of the soldier and the horseman has moulded the character of European gentlemen. They are all heroes and fighters and destroyers of evils and as such ethically inclined. They are reformers and practical men. All the European nations are adventurous, courageous and eager to conquer whatever may happen to challenge their manliness. They have not that defeatist mentality which characterises the people of India. They are trying to climb the Everest, the highest peak of the Himalayas and are renewing their efforts year after year. Nothing seems impossible to them and they are practically the masters of the forces of nature. However attractive this ideal may at first sight appear, and the history of Europe is not more than 4000 years old, on careful consideration of the duration of man's existence in this mundane sphere, it loses its attractiveness. Man's achievements, however great and beneficial they may appear for the time being, are ultimately short-lived and evanescent. Man, the child of the Infinite, requires immortality or *Amrita* and *Amrita* cannot be attained by these achievements. Hence the Hindu *Sadhak* will not care much for Europe.

Yet this ideal of the knight or the soldier, when sincerely followed, and the ideal of *Karma* as indicated in the Gita does not differ much from it, for the good of society and for its purification, after the manner of Tennyson's Arthur, in his *Idylls of the King*, will lead to the conquest of the flesh and give glimpses of truth and loftier visions. Tennyson brings out this in his *Holy Grail* and Cerventes indicates the height of this ideal in his gloomy knight of Salamanca. Don Quixote is the ideal gentleman who takes the vow of sticking to the love of one lady and of delivering all the oppressed and helpless people, whatever may be their troubles, regardless of the consequences to himself, and he attempts the fulfilling of these vows but his idealism makes him unpractical. He mistakes his enemies and fights blindly without discrimination and hence the laughter of the reader at his misadventures. His motive is quite reasonable, but his method is wrong. Perhaps Cerventes means to say that in the 16th century, when he was writing, this method of old must yield place to the new methods, though the essence of chivalry must continue. The days of knightly chivalry and the spirit of the crusader were gone, and those of the Pilgrim Fathers, East India Company and missionaries had come. Really the beginning of the modern Europe has to be traced to the 16th century, when the days of chivalry came to an end. The superiority of the mounted soldier over the fighter on foot could not be maintained

any more, because the invention of gunpowder and the spirit of equality and self reliance introduced by the Reformation, made the claim of the chivalrous knight incongruous and antiquated. When a custom becomes out of date, its form must change, though its spirit, if good, has to be retained and worked out under different garbs. This is the meaning of the book of Cervantes, one of the greatest books of Europe. The hero must sacrifice himself for others' good.

European Society, however, has been moulded by this ideal of self-sacrifice of the heroic fighter. Among the Greeks as well as the Romans every citizen had to fight and defend the country, and the best men among them were the ablest soldiers. All their great men were soldiers. Their kings were first fighters, then law-givers and rulers. In India Kings were not the law-givers and they were merely the heads of the executive government. They were not the greatest and best, but the Rishis were the men of the first order. Our kings were soldiers and rulers and never claimed the first position. Hence they were not the model for others; rather they had to retire from their position and by penance and mortification attain to that wisdom which would lead them to perfection. The ideal of the warrior or a man of the world was an inferior ideal and not the highest one. The other orders—the traders, manufacturers, agriculturists and servants of others did not care for the ideal of a fighter. They had other modes

and methods for the cultivation of their virtues and did not hold themselves in readiness, like the knights of Arthur for adventures. The killing of man, which is the greatest crime was a duty for a king or a Kshatriya only under certain conditions. The revolt of Arjun, as stated in the Gita, against this ideal of a Kshatriya invites a sharp rebuke from Sree Krishna, as refusing to slay men and to shirk one's duty as a soldier will be ruinous to society. Wicked people have to be punished and slain, and it must be the duty of some people to do it. Even now a judge or the hangman cannot be condemned as slayers of men, when they condemn a murderer to death and hang him. Soldiers have to slay men in a justifiable war. Hence the ideal of a Brahmin who could never slay any one and who gave up fighting (Brahmins were "न्यस्तशस्त्राः" — people who never handled any weapon) was the highest. Ahimsa or cessation from violence and slaying any one came to be the ideal of life in India. The Hindu thus can never be a ruthless destroyer of others. He will rather pocket an insult than retaliate it. The European civilisation is a civilisation moulded after the ideal of a warrior and that of India moulded after the ideal of a Brahmin. The European, however, is patriotic, freedom-loving and self-reliant. This has made him ready for certain self-sacrifice and his religion, Christianity, which is essentially ethical, has proved very congenial to his soul. Their patriotism, love of freedom,

spirit of adventure and propagandist religion have made them what they are. Their selfishness is enlightened. They are lovers of their race, country and class. The brother-hood of mankind as taught by their religion has made them liberal and sympathetic. Their wide intellectual culture has improved their virtues indicated above. Men of heroic type are often very sympathetic to the weak. Hence they are chivalrous or respectful towards the weaker sex. Their manners indicate a respectful attitude towards the woman, though it does not idolise her. In the east the emotional attitude goes to the extreme and idolises the woman and when this illusion vanishes, the woman is rudely and brutally maltreated. In Europe such outrages are never committed on the woman that are being perpetrated here. The ideal of purity that Jesus preaches in his Sermon on the Mount and which he characterises as a means of seeing God is an eastern ideal. Neither in Greece nor in Rome it was cultivated in that spirit. Christianity set up this ideal and hence followed the celibacy of the monks and nuns. But this ideal being unpractical for all, the Reformation of the 16th century re-established the custom of matrimony for the clergy. In India life was divided into four stages or *ashrama* and absolute chastity was meant for the first and the last two periods. Nobody, they believed, could attain complete purity without passing through the stage of a householder.

Thus though the ideal of chivalry insisted on a respectful attitude towards the female sex, it could not establish the ideal of purity, which was taught by Christianity. Christianity has sat light on Europe and not taken that deep root which might make the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount a workable scheme of life.

The ideal of chivalry cannot be the highest ideal for man, who must cultivate universal love that Jesus practised. Jesus also taught that no evil was to be resisted or fought against. This seems to me to be the attitude of a Vedantist according to whom there is no evil, as everything exists in God or Brahman, and a Vedantist has to rise above both evil and good, as he has to exceed all other dualities, such as, heat and cold, profit and loss, etc., Evil can be transcended but not crushed. Jesus who loved even the sinner knew that evil could not be overcome by being resisted, but could be outgrown by cultivating the higher principle which transcends both good and evil.

The ideal of chivalry fails in solving this problem of evil and fights against it. The higher principle of love cultivated by the non-combatant monks and nuns did much for the mediaeval civilisation and Europe owes much to them. Love has to be cultivated and when it is sincere enables us to attain a much higher standard than chivalry could.

CHAPTER XI.

The Ideal of Chastity.

There is no doubt that the ideal of female chastity is the same throughout the world, though in practice differences are seen, owing to the diversity in family and social organisations prevailing in the past and the present time and also owing to the differences arising out of the spiritual outlook of different races. The patriarchal system that was based on the inferiority of the female both in the east and the west, enforced the chastity of the female, but as in the west the idea of the immortality of the soul and future life was not so assured as in the east and the relation between the husband and the wife was not so much spiritualised, there was no bar to the marriage of a widow. Nor was the position of the mother held in such high esteem as in India, where the son, who came out of the womb of the wife, was to be the saviour of the soul of the father and his ancestors, by offering oblations from time to time. The relations among the members of a family were then made deeply spiritual and spiritualised and thus these bonds could not be so easily broken. Neither in Greece nor in Rome were these relations spiritualised in this way and hence the ideal of Hindu woman's chastity came to be different from that

of all other races. Moreover the belief of the Hindu in rebirth made it thinkable that the wife of another man might become the actual mother of a man after his death, when his rebirth would take place. Thus the instinct of a Hindu has been formed against the inclination in favour of marrying another's wife. Thus *divorce* also has become unthinkable for an orthodox Hindu. In the western branches of the Aryan race, the Greeks and the Romans, the spiritual interest of life was not pursued so earnestly and so sedulously, as they were busy in fighting for their political ideals and development. They thus became the founders of the political, ethical and other sciences, but the lessons as regards the soul attained by the Hindus must be considered as deeper.

There is no comparison between Helena and Sita, though people often compare them as both were abducted, and two great epics were written based on these incidents. Menelaus accepted his wife back into the bosom of his family, though she is represented by Homer as having been actually wedded to Paris. Such marriages were in vogue among the Greeks and the Romans and the woman was merely a sort of chattels. Queens and Princesses were reduced into slavery when taken captives, but we never read of such treatment accorded in the east to the woman. The insult to Draupadi at the hand of Duryodhan and his party is something exceptional and outrageous. Such violences are

always resented and punished and of the outrages that we see to-day being committed by Hindu *goondas* and outlaws, nobody can accuse the Hindu Community at large. Outlaws and lawless people are everywhere in the level of brutes and beasts and no general indictment can be framed on this datum. The fall of Duryodhana and of Rabana as well is largely ascribed by the poets of the two great epics to their sin of touching another man's wife. Touching another man's wife has not been considered to be a sin in the west, even in this twentieth century, inspite of Christian morality of the two thousand years of which so much is talked and inspite of the teaching of Jesus that purity is essential for spiritual life.

Among the moderns the ideal of love has been developed and the great poets, such as, Shakespeare, Goethe and others have painted some very pure and chaste girls, such as Ophelia, Cordelia, Miranda and others. Desdemona who saw Othello's "visage in his mind" presents the true aspect of chastity. Hence the ideal of true love has been undoubtedly conceived by the greatest teachers and poets, though the legal conception of Europe has not been so spiritualised as to rise to the level of the spiritual aspect of love. Law does not consider the conjugal tie as unbreakable under certain circumstances and if the ideal of equality between the man and the woman be fully given effect to, temporary marriages also will acquire validity and this is

considered as a progress to be achieved in future. Our educated young men and young women also are thinking of such reforms and are agitating for the alteration of the old and effete arrangement of yore!

Poetical pictures of love are beautifully conceived and reach the highest level.

In our Vaisnava literature the longing love of Radha has been made the ideal of religious love and in the European poets also such longing is the highest flight of imagination. Juliet pines and dies for Romeo, and in all poetry this is surely the ideal. In *The Bride of Lammermoor* Sir Walter Scott gives a beautiful but tragic picture of genuine love which attains the ideal, but European society looks upon these ideals as impracticable. Love being pre-nuptial among them, such tragedies are unavoidable. In the east love is post-nuptial and this post-nuptial love of Sita, Damayantee and others is even now the ideal. Eastern ideal is religious and the western poetical. Marriage being a sacrament with the Hindus, love requires a religious sanction and is the religion for the woman. This attitude of mind has raised love to a much higher level above that of mere emotionalism as conceived in the best pictures of European poets. Even when it becomes an attachment between two souls as taught by Plato and one becomes charmed by the beauty of the other, and thus love and beauty become mingled as cause and effect, it cannot acquire that sublimity, when it

becomes the religion of both. It is the duty of a Hindu wife to devote herself, body and soul, to the husband and she cannot have a separate existence apart from his. She is to be absolutely merged into his personality. She has no separate religion from his, nor even a separate soul, so to say. The theory of the individualism that has been developed in Europe since the days of Socrates does not allow the wife to be merged in that way in the husband. Poets may present their devotion as amounting to a merging, but the law keeps their individualities apart and separate. The best view of love at the hand of a European poet does not represent it as the religion of the woman to efface herself and to be one with her husband. The highest ideal of love has been legalised and made a practical religion by the Hindu system of thought. The European thought system may raise its conception of love from the body to the soul by emotion, and may even concretise it by marriage and confirm it by domesticity, yet it does not sanctify it by making the bond permanent. They are united until death sunders them apart.

The objector may say that this lofty conception is purely theoretical and not realised in practice, because many Hindus marry more wives than one and again others marry several wives one after another. This surely gives a rude shock to the ideal. But even in such cases the woman's ideal is uninjured and she attains her perfection by this sacrament, though her hus-

band is degraded from the ideal. Ramchandra, the ideal man, performed his sacrifice with the golden image of Sita and did not marry another wife. Even now there are people who stick to the ideals. The ideal requires to be interpreted to be appreciated by our educated young people of both sexes. The poetical representation of love that they read of in European writers fascinates them, no doubt, and they demand a freedom like that of the European people, but it is necessary to expose the underlying truth on which the two systems of thought have been built. Time has come when the history and genesis of our thought system should be exposed and compared with the European thought system.

The individuality of European ethics is, no doubt, a great truth, but there is a greater truth that we share each other's virtues and vices. Socialism is throwing some light on this fellowship among the members of a community. According to old Hindu conception, the virtue of a wife benefits the husband and the virtue of the son tends to the good of the soul of the departed father and the ancestors in heaven. The sins of the fathers also were believed to be visited on the son. The Bible, the Old Testament also, taught this lesson in the sentence, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the teeth of the children are set on edge;" But other teachers came forward and preached the individual responsibility and Socrates gave prominence to this teaching

afterwards. The development of European ethics has been based on the individuality of every man and woman. But this crass individuality cannot be accepted *in toto* by the Hindus. With them even now joint family life is a reality and however we may talk of the freedom of the woman, she herself feels that she cannot transform herself into the complete European model. The ideal of chastity, therefore, here will be different from that of the west or of the modern ethics. The solution of our problem will have to take note of the individualistic ethics as well as of the old corporate ethics of the Hindus. European ideal has its beauty and it appeals to the poetical imagination, but the claim of the spiritual ideal is more imperative.

CHAPTER XII.

Religious Freedom and Toleration.

Even till very recent times in England, the evidence of an avowed atheist was not acceptable in courts, as he would not take an oath on the Bible. John Stuart Mill in his Essay on "Freedom of Thought and Discussion" has clearly indicated the spirit of intolerance that prevailed even in the 19th century. The catholics had no seat in the British Parliament till the year 1829, and the British king cannot even now be other than protestant. No non-christians were given degrees by the Oxford University till very recent time and women cannot get degrees from that University in this enlightened twentieth century. During the famous Oxford Movement of the forties of the last century, even Gladstone could not think that religious life could be led outside the pale of the Christian Church. The Unitarians are looked upon with an unfavourable eye even at the present time. The protestants and the catholics may not burn and bury alive each other any more, but still they are rarely perfectly tolerant towards each other. This religious narrowness has been intensified by the spirit of nationalism and trade-jealousy in the present time and all these spirits and principles of narrowness find expression in their literature. They may not have caste and

its rigidity in their classes, but the classes there are, and the masses and the classes hate each other. Human nature is the same as brute nature when it indulges in hatred against the brother man and is more destructive and dangerous in its hatred than mere animality. The rivalries and the jealousies of the nations in Europe against each other are the most potent factor in their political thinking and we in India are imbibing all these narrow principles along with the education given by them. The provincial spirit is not as yet so strong, but it is acquiring strength day by day and in course of time we shall be warring against each other and hating each other as the French and the Germans are doing. Now we have got a third party against all of us, whom we wish to curb and this is our common interest, but this will not continue long. The Federation and the Provincial Autonomy will destroy the little unity we have achieved and very soon it will be rent into shreds. Religion, again, has been made the basis of franchise and thus another source of quarrel has been created to foster the growth of the spirit of communalism, and our leaders are playing into the hands of the authors of our disunion.

Socrates had taught the principle of freedom of the individual from the bonds of the family by proving the individuality of every man and the independence of his conscience. But the political system under which he was living did

not accept his teaching and tried to put an end to his pernicious teaching by killing him. Religious freedom they could not think of. Neither could Europe give religious freedom to the Christian subjects of the Roman Emperors. They had some respite when in the 5th century, Constantine made Christianity the state religion. But this change in the object of worship, did not relax the authority of the state in matters religious. Thus there was no religious freedom in Europe till very recent time. Even now it can hardly be said that perfect freedom to pursue one's religious beliefs has been legalised in European countries, where the church is a part of the state machinery and just as in political matters, one has to submit to the government, so in religious matters also one has to submit to the church. Religion being made a part of the political organisation, forms have acquired great importance. Some people are, no doubt, asserting their freedom in religious matters, but these are exceptions, the majority being under the jurisdiction of the constituted authorities. It has been stated already in chapter VI under the heading "Form" that in Europe more attention is paid to form and so perfect toleration is impossible. Religion being moreover taught by an infallible and revealed book, the Bible, freedom of interpretation alone can be accorded to a limited extent. They could never rise to the freedom demanded by Leigh Hunt who wrote a book, "Religion of the Heart" and which is now

out of print and even the name is not known to the British book-sellers. The East India Company out of sheer necessity adopted the principle of religious toleration in India, as they contemned both Hinduism and Islam equally, and were afraid of siding with either party. Among the governments of the world, perhaps, such mentality is even now a rare thing. There being only one book, which is considered as revealed, there can be little freedom for the individual conscience or heart. Here the Rishis had given the perfect freedom to every Sadhak, as they believed in direct revelation to be made to every soul. God was **प्रतिबोधविदितं** (revealed to every soul) in their view and as they were more anxious for spiritual worship, and meditation, they could not interfere with the meditation of another man. Meditation has no form and hence the utmost freedom has prevailed here since the remote antiquity. **नासौमुनिर्यस्यमतंममिहं**

“One who has not arrived at a conclusion of his own about the Godhead, is not a thinker at all.” Hence in India there have been so many sects, so many incarnations and so many *gurus* and paths. Even the atheistic teachers, Gautama and Mahavir, have been accepted as incarnations and *gurus*, and there was no persecution against them. There has not been so much freedom of thought and opinion in any other country in the world. Every worshipper was given perfect freedom in the last two periods of

his life, *Banaprastha* and *Sannyasa*. During the period of *Brahmacharyya* and domestic life certain rules and disciplines were enforced for the good of the students themselves and for the good of the society. After one retired from the life of a householder, absolute freedom was given to him. Even now when a man becomes a religious mendicant, he cares little for social conventions. Conventions are conventions here and never acquire the validity of absolute truths. We being ignorant of our religious books and the principles underlying them, we belaud the European mode of freedom. But if one carefully analyses the contents of European freedom and toleration, one will be surprised to see their narrowness. Most European thinkers can hardly emerge out of their own narrow grooves to think of things freely.

In this connection, it will suffice to refer simply to the quarrels and schisms in the Christian church since the earliest times. Whenever organisations are attempted, defections will take place, and these defections and dissensions assumed in Europe formidable shapes and deluged the world in blood. The Thirty Years' War in Germany between the Catholics and the Protestants raged ruthlessly and led to the depopulation of a large part of Germany. In England itself Queen Mary burned three hundred protestants and Elizabeth burned as many catholics. Lecky in his "History of Rationalisation in Europe" states that owing to

their superstitious belief in witches, the various nations of Europe had burnt one hundred thousand decrepit old women as witches. In India women were burned on the funeral pyre of their husbands out of a religious belief which has a validity of its own, and was not a mere superstitious belief. There were abuses and hence there was justification to put it down with a strong hand. It was not, however, a superstitious belief like the belief in witchcraft.

The very fact that the religious teachers and missionaries preach their religion as the only true religion and Jesus as the only saviour for all men, makes it impossible for them to be tolerant towards others in the right spirit. Toleration of the right kind means inclination to accept truths from others instead of a mere indifference towards them. When the mentality is one of superiority over or contempt towards others, it is not toleration of the right sort. In India, however, there prevailed a quite different spirit. The Hindus tolerated Buddha and Mahabir, honoured them and accepted what was true in them, because they believed that every one had a power to realise new truths and if you wish to get new truths, you must honour the professors of new truths. So the Hindu Sadhaks are even now respectful towards the teachers of other religions. Harmony of faiths may be sincerely accepted by the Hindu, who gives credit to every man of some originality of his own. Perhaps in India alone, we can evolve a faith

which will harmonise all faiths in the right spirit.

In the pursuit of science, there is a perfectly sympathetic fellowship in the civilised world and scientists appreciate the truths discovered every where. But as regards religion this wide outlook is lacking, though considering the nature of religious truths there should be much more tolerant attitude. There can be no certainty like that of scientific truths in the problems of religion, and yet people want uniformity of faith and practices, and are going on preaching particular faiths. This creates troubles and quarrels. Times have come when such preaching should be stopped and ethical principles and principles of human brotherhood and universally acceptable spiritual truths should be preached. There should be a readiness to accept truths from all sources just as scientific truths are welcomed from whatever source they may come. Toleration requires a respectful attitude towards others and not one of contempt. The leaders of thought may do much to create a calm and receptive attitude, if they are inspired by the right spirit of toleration. The attitude of superiority over others is not a healthy frame of mind. Most writers and thinkers, however, are not free from this conceit and this gives rise to troubles. Perhaps the world is not as yet sufficiently enlightened to attain the mentality of perfect toleration.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Church and the State.

In connection with the question of religious freedom, toleration and organised church, there arises the question of the relation between the church and the state. Here in India, though the kings had the duty to enforce the laws and they were mostly religious laws, yet they never thought of opposing the Brahmins and Rishis, and the Rishis also being more sincerely other-worldly and detached, were devoted to the religious exercises, penance and meditation. The variety of religious books, opinions and exercises, sacrifices and rites widened their outlook and they did not invoke the royal authority to enforce their opinions. In Europe from the beginning of their civilisation in Greece and Rome, religion was a part of the state machinery and a uniformity of worship was enforced. The individual never demanded the freedom that the Sadhak enjoyed here, nor was he given that latitude. Neither was religion so absorbing an interest in their lives as here. When Christianity became the state religion in Rome, the same relation between the church and the state continued, and the church was shaped after the state with a centralised authority, the Pope, and his subordinates in the church became the sole protector of life and property during the days of anarchy after

the destruction of Rome, in the 5th century, and this made these priests practically political powers. The church, therefore, could never rid itself of its political tendencies and power, though it assumed a tone of superiority, at times, to the political authorities. Moreover the political sword and spiritual sword were practically wielded by the same caste, viz., the aristocrats. One brother might be a landholder and another the archbishop of Canterbury. The absence of a caste system might have been a good thing from one stand-point, but the so-called Brahmins or priests of Europe had no real sanctity in the eyes of the laity, because they were the same men wearing different garbs. These priests were as selfish and power-loving as the nobles and thus the sanctimonious claim of superiority of the priests was not an acceptable principle. The whole community was sunk in worldliness and materiality and it was only a few men here and there who had a really religious life, so the Kshatriya spirit and Kshatriya ideal was the highest ideal in the European polity and social system. Hence there arose the orders of monks and friars, but these also like our Buddhist monks were demoralised in two hundred years and the celibacy of the clergy made the clergy also corrupt and immoral. The greatest discovery of the Hindu system of thought was the division of life into four stages of Brahmacharyya, Grihastya, Banaprastha and Sannyasa. This graduation of life into four stages made it possible

for all to attain *Jnan* and to do *Karma* for purification in order to lead the life of a recluse in the last two stages. Religion was a reality in our country, whereas in Europe it rarely acquired that importance. Those European thinkers who lack this vision of the depth of the Hindu's spirituality fail to appreciate our old literature and the religious practices of to-day. They call themselves rational and scientific, but do not see that their rationality and the scientific spirit do not lead them beyond the limits of this life. This life to a Hindu is a transitory thing, whose importance is spiritual, otherwise it is "a meaningless tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing." The civilisation of Europe has grown with the life in this world and its happiness and comforts as the all-important things and hence their efforts have been successful for making themselves happy and powerful. They are exploiting the whole world and its resources for their body. The soul does not require so much exertion for worldly success. Our ancestors never went out of their country which produced enough food for maintaining their body. Those who regret the absence of the spirit of adventure in the Hindus of olden days should learn first what things are valuable in life. Their valuation of things is different from that of our ancestors. The Aryans who migrated from one country into another, fought with their enemies, but after having settled in India developed their spiritual outlooks in a unique and wonderful manner, so

that no other race can be credited with their depth and fervour.

European priests were truly religious by exceptions, but as a rule they were prudent and worldly-minded people moved by what may be called *Rajoguna* and the Kshatriya spirit of love of power and pelf. The church is even now a potent organisation, but many thinkers doubt its capacity for fostering the truly religious life. On the contrary, the Age of the Apostles, when the Christian church was not an organised body, is regarded as the best period of real religious life and earnestness. The insidious influence of pelf and power works havoc among the professors of religion and even the missionaries are now considered as forerunners of the European soldiers and traders in the east. They come to exploit the weaker races under the pretence of spreading their truer religion, but really they denationalise the converts and give them a European outlook on life. It is outwardly attractive and even pretentious in its claim of moral superiority, but extremely worldly in spirit. The so-called barbarity of these weaker people is preferable to their civilisation, which is selfish at the core.

Bolshevic Russia has destroyed this church organisation, and it may be expected that she will build a better religious life under the voluntary system which will give freedom to the individual to follow his own faith. But unless they acquire a correct metaphysic of freedom for the individual soul, they also will fail. In India, we are

better off without any church organisation and in course of time people will see the wisdom of discarding the communal representation on which their democracy is going to be built. It is an iniquitous arrangement forced on a weak nation, which cannot set its own house in order. European politicians often fail to understand our view-points and make serious blunders, though their motives may be quite honest. Our rulers may have been inspired by good motives, but have failed in giving effect to their intentions which may be quite benevolent.

Even in this enlightened era the church is hampering well-educated people who demand absolute freedom of worship. Without the perfect freedom of the Sannyasa of our country, deeper religious life cannot grow, nor the true philosophy be harmonised with religion.

In our country philosophy and faith were at one and philosophy was reduced to practice. In Europe since the days of Socrates philosophy was persecuted. Anaxagoras, the *guru* of Socrates, had to banish himself from Athens; Socrates was poisoned for asserting his freedom, and the names of several martyrs illuminate the history of the Church. Carlyle, however, in his *Essay on History* sighs for the time when priests will be philosophers. Their religion, Christianity, in spite of its rational garb, does not foster absolute reason and rationality. Since the time of St. Paul and Peter, opinion they persecute and cannot believe that a man who thinks with per-

fect freedom can attain salvation. St. Paul himself was a persecutor of Christians before his conversion and after his conversion he persecuted the heathens at least in thought and belief. And he as the creator of Christian theology and Trinity may be held responsible for the schisms and quarrels.

The Christian theology of Trinity is derived from his writings and the organisation of the Christian church is the outcome of his teachings moulded by the Roman political genius. In my humble opinion the Christian nations of Europe are incapable of rising to the highest ideal of freedom. They are practical, politically free, and successful in managing their affairs, but incapable of understanding that the soul grows under the atmosphere of perfect freedom. They wish to die in the harness like an old horse and remain active up to the last moment. Works they are doing, but their works are all ego-centric, and inspired by the love for the ego. Even their philanthropic work is ego-centric. They are patriotic, self-reliant and ready to die for their race and country. But they do not hesitate to exploit the weaker races. We a dependent people are growing worse than they. Our selfishness has no relieving feature of patriotism. We are wholly selfish and jealous against each other. Europeans are free from our smallness. We educated Indians are much worse than the most selfish European.

Democracy and the love of freedom and equality among themselves makes them more sociable. Their urban civilisation has made them more polite and courteous in their treatment of each other. Their Socratic individuality has made them self-reliant. They demand individuality for themselves and give to their women the same individuality. In short, their love of organisation in the church and the state has made them efficient and happy. They are the rulers and lords of disorganised people of India and of other weaker races. Their organisations we are imitating, but it is not possible to attain our highest ideal by imitation. We should understand the limitations within which organisation works well and how to subordinate this organisation to the highest interest of the soul that demands absolute freedom in certain stages of its existence. Will Europe pause to think how we differ from her? She has had no rest as yet to think deeply on the problems that engaged the attention of the East in the remote past.

Organisation and unity are good things up to a certain limit, but as soon as I have to associate with another, I cannot maintain my greatness, but have to come down to the level of another and think within the limitations of time and space. Everyman, when alone, can feel his greatness and realise it in his own way, but organisation will limit his freedom. Church organisation therefore has dwarfed the religious imagination everywhere.

CHAPTER XIV.

The High and the Low.

In the European social system classes have existed since the days of Homer to the present time, but these classes have not been hardened into castes and they as well as we the modern educated consider their arrangement as better. There is no doubt that their classes depend on the differences of wealth and possession, and a moneyed man, of whatever origin he may be, comes to occupy the highest position in society. Among rulers and Kshatriyas in our country conquerors have occupied the highest position. Among the Mahomedan conquerors also rank depended on manliness. Thus wealth and power have been the passports to social supremacy both in the west and the east. It is not that birth had no claim in the west. Birth has an importance now also, though formerly it had greater importance. Among the Hindus who assign birth to previous *Karma*, birth has acquired an importance unknown elsewhere and this exclusive claim of birth, the basis of caste, is questioned by us, who want to recognise merit as the only valid claim for superiority, but in point of fact we also do not care for merit but yield precedence to wealth.

The orthodox belief in the caste principle is more sincere and consistent in a man's dealings

with others than, the dealings of enlightened people, who profess allegiance to merit, but actually submit to wealth and power. European class system is based on wealth and power and as such has little to do with the spiritual principle of caste, which was originated to encourage acquisition of intellectual and moral qualities. We may cite several instances of people of non-Brahmin origin acquiring Brahminical rank for their spiritual attainments.

European class division encourages competition and rivalry and thus is helpful to social progress. If by any means one may amass some wealth, he will become somebody. It thus encourages enterprise and adventure. It keeps people young and energetic and hence European civilisation appeals to the young. It inspires hopes and goads a man from achievement to achievement. Napoleon who aspired to found a dynasty married a princess of Austria and half succeeded in his attempt. His nephew Luis Napoleon emulated his program and was successful.

Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon, the greatest conquerors of the world, were inspired by the same spirit and ideal. They were all founders of empires and initiators of great changes and reforms, but all of them were prophets of the materialistic ideal of life. They were all practical and successful conquerors and the civilisation of Europe is deeply indebted to them. We also indirectly have been influenced by their achieve-

ments. The first was a potent force in establishing a contact between India and Greece in the fourth century B. C. and the influence of Greece has been deep on us, at least as regards our arts, idolatry and the science of astronomy. Caesar and Napoleon, also great emperors, powerfully moulded the life of Europe in ancient and modern times. But these great rulers were all men of the world and of the spirit of the earth, and as such they cannot satisfy the east. Both of them had no religion, though they utilised it for their political ends.

The aristocrats of Europe have always been in hostile relation to the lower orders, whom they ruthlessly exploited and tried to suppress and keep under subjection.

The treatment of the Spartan Helots by the Spartan nobles, of the slaves by the Roman masters, who sometimes cut the bodies of their slaves to feed their fish and employed their slaves to slay each other for their own amusement in the gladiator's arena, are too well-known to need repetition. In France in the 18th century, the serfs had to keep awake to quiet the frogs, so that the lord of the manor might sleep undisturbed and to render other such services. In England this serfdom had disappeared, but the factory labourer's slavery to the Capitalist had begun about the same time, *i.e.*, the last quarter of the 18th century. Thus the hostile relation between the haves and have-nots is going on in Europe inspite of the French Revolution of 1789,

that taught the ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

There is an outward equality and fraternity practised in Europe, yet the distinctions between the rich and the poor are irremovable. They are resented by the poor and foment discontent. England is cleverly smoothing these differences by giving more and more attention to the alleviation of the misery of the poor by taxing the rich, and thus keeping revolution at an arm's length. But Russian Bolshevism is a perpetual object lesson to the labourers of other lands. In India the caste system has a basis which even the lower orders do not think to be assailable. People are trying to establish their claims to the four Vedic castes, but they never think of abolishing caste altogether. Nobody stands in the way of any caste, however low, though the untouchables have been taught to assert themselves in a novel way. The custom of untouchability is not according to the Vedic four castes and as such invites assault. The defenders of this custom will have to give way, as it is unnatural. In the Hindu Sastras certain professions have been condemned, but as many of them, *e.g.*, selling flesh, meat, wine etc. have become respectable, one cannot, any more, for his business, be considered as untouchable. The scavengers and sweepers are very useful members of society. How can it be justified that they are untouchable? No human being is untouchable to another human being, unless he has got some

infectious diseases. Even an immoral person is not untouchable, because among the higher classes there are many immoral voluptuaries and drunkards. Untouchability will go but not caste. European class system invites assault, as it depends on wealth and people seek wealth. They may come and take away my property, but cannot take away my parentage. Therefore it is unassailable. If I demand respect from another, he may refuse to give it. But a true Brahmin does not demand anything from another. He will prefer to be insulted to insulting another. European class system has been a source of social unrest and quarrel, as it has forced the man below to submit to the richer man. Times are coming when no sort of privileges can be claimed by any caste, and all the opportunities for moral, spiritual and material improvement, so far as law can secure them, will be the same for all. All social revolutions will be effected here peacefully and not by forcing people to it. European social system and their ideal of equality are always liable to criticism, and invite attack. European critics of the caste system have pointed out its hold on the popular mind and wondered at it. It being soul-centric cannot be disputed and invalidated so roughly as people think.

Just as the equality between the sexes has proved to be a source of unrest and disquiet in the family, so their theory of equality has disturbed their political, economical and social life.

Everybody wants a stability in all the spheres of life and activity, but cannot suggest how that may be established. Europe could not attain it in the past, neither she has attained it at the present time. She fails in all her attempts. Her democracy, socialism, communism and all such recipes are found to be temporary shifts. The underlying reason of this failure is that the view point of their life is materialistic. Christianity gave a spiritual outlook, but that is not sincerely acted upon. If all men and women could be inspired with the spirit of Christ, and were satisfied with the bare necessities of life, there might be a genuine brother-hood. But such a brother-hood cannot be established on the ideal of bodily comfort and of exploitation of one class by another. The biological theory of the survival of the fittest or the most brutal and destructive must be given up and substituted by the principle of love and sympathy. Without a deeply spiritual atmosphere in the society, and a sincere belief in the spiritual nature of man, there can be no peace and harmony. In India caste gave a spiritual angle of vision at the things of this life and inspite of its defects made life bearable. The poverty and culture of the Brahmins made them worthy of sympathy and veneration. Brahminical renunciation was practised by Kshatriya rulers also, who gave up every thing for religion in the last stages of life. There was a religious out-look on life and a spiritual atmosphere. They believed in destiny and *karma*

and that made them contented with their lot. This contentment might deter them from all attempts at self-improvement of the type for which we are anxious. But they paid more attention and devoted more time for their spiritual welfare. All men and women cherished some spiritual ideals for which they were anxious. Nobles and aristocrats in Europe have, on the contrary, been oppressive to the lower orders whom they have always exploited. Democratic restlessness goes some way, no doubt, but not very far. It is destroying the feeling of reverence for rank and birth and along with it is injuring faith in God. This is the worst blot on the democracy of Europe. Democracy has created an unhealthy spirit of rivalry and a feverish spirit of worldliness. It has made this life and its pursuits all-absorbing, and shoved off religion and higher morality from the field of vision altogether for most men. It has secularised our life and made comforts the only objects worth struggling for. Man is making himself into a money-earning machine, whether he be rich or poor and there are very few who can have time for anything else. Caste system created at least a few who were assured of a living, so that they might devote their energy and time for a spiritual ideal and thus serve as models to others. But now from the first man in a community to the last all are actuated by the same motive. The President of the American Republic or the Viceroy of India is equally anxious for his

worldly interest as the meanest citizen. Their talk of doing good to others is more or less insincere and conventional. People do not consider them as very anxious for the poor under their care, as a Janak or a Ramchandra was believed to be. These rulers have no better spiritual ideal than the poorest man under them. Formerly the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas had better ideals of self-sacrifice to follow than other men and they were believed as inspired with nobler objects in their efforts and endeavours.

It may be contended that those ideals are now impracticable and Quixotic. The reply is that though Quixotic, they are true and worth implementing in actual life. Unless the social atmosphere be altered and what is Quixotic be made practicable and feasible, the world cannot have rest or real happiness. Real happiness may come only from a spiritual ideal which does not injure a brother man. We are not stating what is now capable of being practised, but pointing out what was the effect of the old social organisation and what was the fundamental belief underlying that organisation. This belief may be created again and the rulers of men become again sensible and give up their mad pursuit of material comforts, and establish higher moral and spiritual ideal for themselves, so as to establish peace and harmony among mankind.

CHAPTER XV.

The Ideals of the French Revolution.

The upheaval of the year 1789 in France is a unique event in the history of Europe, but it is a necessary consequence of the progress of the body-centric civilisation developed in the western world since the earliest time. The ideal of political freedom which was conceived by the Greeks and worked out by the Romans has been the main current in the life-history of all the European nations. We also have been assimilating that spirit from the English literature during the last one hundred years and hope that it will take a deep root in the soil of India and bear good fruits, as Macaulay anticipated, when he closed the controversy about the education to be given to the Indians.

It was the Greeks who realised the ideal of the freedom of each state, however small or large, and resented the attempts of Sparta and Athens at establishing a hegemony, and thus prevented any federation of the Hellenic race from being formed against the barbaric invasion from Persia. The modern ideal of the autonomy of each country is a new version of the same old ideal. The Roman Empire was an interference with that ideal and though it preserved the European civilisation against the attack of Hannibal or Mithradates, yet the imperialism of

Rome may be conceived as having suppressed the Greek ideal of the freedom of each state. On the dissolution of the Roman empire in the fifth century, some sort of anarchy prevailed for about a thousand years, but it was really a period of incubation. The modern nations, the English, the French, the Italians and others were forming under the spiritual empire of the Pope of Rome. The spiritual sword of Rome was a substitute for her secular sword during this period of a thousand years and established the ideal of ethical life and gave a spiritual outlook to their thoughts and activities. During these one thousand years, the descendants of Plato and Virgil came to know what sins were and how they might be expiated. They also were enabled to realise the inviolability of the ethical commands issued from the heart of every man. But the old Greek ideal of the freedom of each nation or state became unintelligible by the pressure of the spiritual imperialism of the Pope. By the sixteenth century, however, the old ideal of national freedom began to assert itself. In England, from the time of Edward III people felt a new life. The protestant Reformation of Luther of the sixteenth century was not only an assertion of man's spiritual individuality, but it was a denial of the imperialism of the Roman Pope. The appeal of Luther's freedom movement was not only to the spiritual individuality of every man, but it stirred up the dormant nationalistic ideal against which Pericles,

the greatest Greek statesman, had failed in his attempt at uniting Greece.

The English people, fortunately, being an insular nation, had been developing their national life since the twelfth century and were a fully developed nation in the sixteenth. Being aloof from the continental turmoil of the Thirty Years' War, they had quiet and peace to cultivate their literature and to improve their arts and enterprise wonderfully in the time of Queen Elizabeth. In fact it was during this reign that the seeds of all their great things were germinating. Their commercial and colonial expansion had a healthy growth and progress during this reign. There had already been an equalisation between the different orders of her people and thus no revolution ever took place to disturb the social orders in England.

In the continental countries the imperialism of the Pope provoked civil wars and these terminated in disturbing the healthy growth of national life. The Teutonic peoples of the northern half of Europe resented the Papal imperialism and denied his authority. The emotional Celtic people of the south in France, Italy and Spain still supported the imperialism of the Pope and there was no healthy national growth, neither there could be established that equalisation between the different social orders that is needed for the healthy growth of a nation. In France and other southern countries the inequalities between the different orders were glaring

and provoking. There were injustice and iniquity in these differences, so that the nobles and the priests treated the common people as mere dirt of their feet. The old ideal of the individuality of every man that Socrates had taught in the fifth century B. C. and that was well-known among all subsequent ethical teachers, but had not been made popular on account of the imperialism of Rome and of the Pope, and was trampled upon by the superior fighter, the knight of the middle ages, again began to be preached by Rousseau, Voltaire, the Encyclopaedists and other teachers of new enlightenment. The eighteenth century, an age of reason, really did throw a mass of light on the thought-currents of that age. Not only the idea of social equality of men became evident, but the ideal of the brother-hood as taught by Christianity also became a practical ideal. The hierarchy in the church and the state had smothered these plain truths taught by Jesus and his disciples in the apostolic age, but these were now clearly seen by the teachers of the new light. They would not have enthused the popular mind in the way they did, if they had not been denied and trodden under the feet by the spiritual and secular administration of the previous centuries. There were false claims of sanctity and false claims of superiority made by the priests and the nobles and therefore they could not be maintained in this enlightened age. The leaders of the French Revolution derived their

inspiration from the Greeks who had held up both the ideals of the freedom of the individual man in matters ethical and spiritual and also the ideal of the freedom of each state. The Napoleonic imperialism again crushed both these ideals, but from the dissolution of his empire these ideals again emerged with greater vigour and potency. The whole nineteenth century and the twentieth will, perhaps, be required to establish these ideals of the freedom of the individual man and woman as well as of groups of men living within certain geographical areas and calling themselves a nation.

The individual, whether rich or poor, man or woman, black or white, demands perfect freedom in his ethical, economical and other activities that makes for his own good. Nobody can claim now to be the self-elected guardian or benefactor of another person. The relations that created dependence of one person on another are now being denied or modified. Revolutionary changes, therefore, in the social, political and other organisations of men are unavoidable. What modifications will take place in these relations between man and man can hardly be foreseen. The ideals of liberty, equality and brotherhood are being applied and acted on. But in spite of the visions of perfection that people expect to result from the establishment of these ideals, we may point out that the changes that have already taken place as partial fulfilment of that perfection have not made men morally and

spiritually better; rather they have been made more restless and discontented. The democracies that have been established already are being modified into autocracies and autocracies are being organised in novel ways, which may be called a new sort of dictatorship or fascism.

The ideals of the individuality of man and the freedom he requires for it are not very helpful and consistent with the right view of man's soul, being based on the conception of man as an intelligent animal without any future destiny. The perfections that these ideals will lead to do not refer to man's soul so much as to his body and its happiness. In fact the European conception of the soul of a man is not very clear and is defective, and the European view of the meaning and purpose of life is rather materialistic, and at best ethical. It stops short at the level of the brain power and does not rise above it. We, in the east, however, consider even the mind as an organ like the other senses and as such as destructible. People who care for the freedom of the soul, will not fight with others for accepting this truth. Nor will they assert any equality between a Brahmin and a pariah, unless the latter can rise to the level of the former. The real equality is in the soul, but not in the body or in the brain. Equality is false and untrue in the material plane i.e., within the limits of time and space. It is true in the psychic or the soul plane. Similarly the freedom for which Europe is anxious is for the happiness of the body and creates

quarrels. This European ideal is being worked out through bloodshed and revolutions during the last one hundred and fifty years, and it is very doubtful, if the European ideal of freedom can ever be established and equilibrium attained in social life. There is always a danger of social upheavals and agitation, as there can be no stability in society by trying to establish the ideal of freedom for men and women, who are always actuated by selfish aims and aspirations. The leaders everywhere are ambitious and self-seeking people. Since the days of Athenian democracy that took its rise in the sixth century B. C., democracy could never attain stability and peace and is always exposed to the danger of revolutions.

The ideal of brotherhood again without believing in the fatherhood of God, is an unreality and a falsehood. Now to believe in the fatherhood of God means to believe in something higher than the mind in man, but European analysis of the human nature has not yet established the existence of any such super-sensuous reality, even in its philosophy. The common people also know very little of that divine entity as the soul of man. Therefore the brotherhood of men also is an unreality which does not regulate their conduct. The treatment of the black races by the white people of Europe is a clear proof of the unreality of their theory of brotherhood.

If we compare the French propagandists

with our Buddhist teachers and missionaries who sincerely believed the truths of *Maitri* (love) *Karuna* (pity) *Mudita* (joyousness) and *Upeksha* (non-interference) and preached them throughout the world and were gladly accepted by strangers as their guides and friends, we shall see the difference at once. Higher truths appeal to men everywhere, but not falsehoods. A man who sincerely believes in the brotherhood of mankind cannot fight to make others accept his ideas. One who believes that men should be free cannot be anxious for power over others. Europe has failed during the last three thousand years in giving peace to mankind, and in spite of professing Christianity will fail. How can this religion of love be propagated by those who cannot rise to the level of the soul, but remain in the lower level of the mind? Time has come when we should revise our estimate of the European civilisation and culture and try to see what soul-truths were attained there. Our educational system requires overhauling so that our educated people may get the right perspective of life.

Those who do not practise self-restraint properly cannot establish freedom and liberty, and self-restraint is the result of a higher life in which there is a clear recognition of the higher-self and the lower-self. In the Indian system of self-culture, the greatest importance has been attached to self-restraint. Without internal restraint i.e., a strong will power (शक्ति), the external senses cannot be controlled. Here also the ideal

of desirlessness must be strongly held and aimed at. The stoics alone advocated the ideal of desirelessness, but it is rarely practicable according to the European scheme of life. Unless one be sincerely ready to give freedom to another, he cannot be considered as a true votary of freedom. Equality is also a chimera within the limits of practical life. God has created great inequalities and therefore to deny them is a mistake. Real equality is moral and spiritual. Those who can rise to the spiritual level of existence, can practise equality, but it is beyond the reach of most men. Equality can be practised by one who has no interest of the body to be anxious about. The Buddhists practised it, because they were for the good of all. Their love for all made them fit for these high principles. To call man a brother and to slay him mercilessly is the practical rule of life now-a-days, but this is the greatest lie of the modern times and most people follow this falsehood and yet preach brotherhood. Sincere ethics does not teach such lessons. There is little sincerity in the social and political activities of the civilised nations.

CHAPTER XVI.

Philosophy and Religion.

In the European system of thought there has been an eternal divergence between reasoning and religion, since the days of the myths of the Olympic gods, who were popularised by the minstrels and rhapsodists of whom Homer was the greatest. There was very little attempt among the rationalists to purify these myths and legends and to harmonise them and thus to make them acceptable to people following correct moral principles. When Socrates and others in the sixth and fifth centuries B. C. made attempts to rationalise the conception of the mythic gods, they were persecuted. Anaxagoras, the *guru* of Socrates, had to leave Athens to save his life, Socrates himself was put to death as a corrupter of young men and for having introduced new gods. Though Plato and Aristotle were not persecuted, they were not popular like Buddha or Mahavir, both of whom, though philosophers, came, in course of time, to have followers by thousands. The mass of people in Europe has from the earliest time been hostile to rational methods of religious culture.

In India, on the contrary, since the earliest time, as we see in the Rig Veda, reasoning has been the basis of belief and thinking and introspective meditation resorted to for discovering

truth. Any one perusing the Vedas with an open mind will come to the conclusion that the Aryan fathers of the race had ideas not only about the power of the gods, but also about their inclination and willingness to help their worshippers and the votaries. The Vaidik gods are far otherwise than the immoral, power-loving and jealous gods of the Greek mythology. The Rishis realised in the earliest time the all-pervasiveness of the divine power, though, they like other early thinkers, propitiated them by gifts. Their gods, however, though many in number, gradually came to be conceived as manifestations of the same power. Such a conception of unity was never realised by the worshippers of the Greek or the Roman pantheons. The introspective method of the Hindus enabled them to realise the unity much earlier. When the Vaidik ardour, with the development of deeper thinking, led to the Vedantik and more profound meditation, the method of offering material things and performing bloody sacrifices came to be considered as an inferior mode of worship, and thinking or meditation alone being considered as a higher and more rational mode. There is one systematic pursuit of truth in the whole Hindu Sadhana, and the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Purans are all inter-connected by the same search underlying them. The Purans are nothing but the illustrations of the deeper truths of the Vedanta or the Upanishads, by means of stories and personifications of the Godhead.

In Europe, on the other hand, philosophy and philosophising led only to the doubting of the Olympic gods. Plato and other serious people gave up all faith in the gods, because they could not satisfy the reasoning power of men. The masses who had very little morality or any earnest faith grew more and more superstitious, as they lost faith in their gods. They added all sorts of divinities to their pantheons and worshipped power and nothing but power. The immoral and wicked Roman emperors were worshipped, because they had power. When thus only power came to be worshipped, Christianity was introduced. It being presented by St. Paul as a religion of love, it appealed to the masses. But the mass mind in the Roman empire had little reasoning power. The philosophy of Paul, (e.g., we live, move and have our being in God), by no means clear even to-day to erudite Christian scholars, was not cared for. God's love for the sinner as manifested in and through Christ appealed to the common people. It appeals even now. Thus the gulf between reason and faith has been widened by the culture of Christianity and practically unreasoned faith is preached even now, during the two thousand years of Christian *Sadhana*. Very few, it seems, care to understand the position of Paul, who was the apostle of the Gentiles and the founder of Christian theology. His theology being partly rational, due to the influence of Plato, and partly dogmatic, teaching the meditatorship of Jesus

creates confusion. The theory of incarnation cannot be rationalised, unless you accept the Vedantic theory of the incarnation of every man.

Since the nineteenth century, however, attempts are being made to rationalise the claims of Christianity, but the exclusive sonship of Jesus has proved a stumbling block even to the best philosophers. The first step on this behalf has been taken by some Unitarian writers, but they also labour under the bias of their prestige of superior civilisation and do not feel inclined to give the same position to other incarnations. As certain beliefs are cherished by the civilised European nations, they must be proved to be better, though they really are worse than many other popular beliefs of the east. The Indian incarnations are not meditators of that sort, because they are not exclusive in their claims.

For instance, the incarnation of Jesus is as reasonable as the incarnation of many other persons in the east, yet they consider the claim of Jesus as unique and as the only truth. In India there were sporadic cases of religious persecutions, but there never was any Jihad declared against anybody, because here faith in any exclusive god or man was never held. Perfect toleration of other men's faith has been taught here since the remote antiquity. In India there have been many philosophies, but all devoted to the interpretation of the Vaidik truths and philosophising was intended here for the purpose of interpreting the eternal truths revealed in the

Vedas. Thus here a perfect harmony between faith and reason has been traditionally cultivated.

The application of reason to faith has resulted in the harmony that we see among all the modes of religious culture, *viz.*, Jnan, Bhakti and Karma. Intellectual culture, therefore, was with the Hindu a religious pursuit and all the Sastras were considered as sacred. When we were children, even a written piece of paper we considered as sacred and all learned men were considered as fit to be revered. There was a profound regard for learning and learned men in our unhappy land.

In Europe reason has been persecuted and Christianity is responsible for the persecution of men like Galileo, Bruno, Roger Bacon and several other great lights. Life was made unbearable to Leibnitz, Dr. Priestly and several others in more recent times. Opinion is still being persecuted in Germany, Italy and elsewhere, if it militate against the opinions of the powers that be. No government in Europe or elsewhere in modern times, that are influenced by the European mode of thinking, will allow perfect freedom of thought, if that thought disturbs their *Status quo*, whether in politics, religion or social matters. People holding different opinions are not inclined to tolerate each other and follow the principle of "live and let live."

This intolerance of thought and opinion is due to the fact that their thoughts now concern more the body and may endanger life. The

Indian system of thought considered the soul as its topic and all philosophising ultimately referred to the soul. Intellectual acumen was needed for the interest of the soul and all sorts of knowledge was meant to help the soul in its realisation of itself. In Europe all ingenuity, science, philosophy, literature and other branches of knowledge must tend to improve man's lot here in this world. Hence there must be quarrel, when any new truth goes against the vested interest of some people. Here even Brahmins who were professional priests and as such were benefited by the customs and ceremonies laid down in the Vedas did not persecute Buddha, but waited on him from time to time to discuss truths with him. Truths about the soul were welcomed here from all quarters.

Even in most modern times philosophy has not dared in Europe to regulate religion and be a substitute for the theory of incarnation that the established governments maintain. Those who are absolutists and are believers in the one Spirit alone and do not believe in the particular sonship of any man or in any exclusive dispensation as the only truth, have not as yet been able to organise any creed or found any sect of worshippers and have not tried to popularise their teachings. In India Dadu, Kabir and others made their highest teachings matters of practice and propagated them among the masses. Even illiterate people of this country understand deep philosophical truths and practise meditation.

There are several sects who worship no god of the mythology but the one God revealed in the heart of every man. These Bauls, as they are called, are illiterate, according to our modern parlance, but they understand the deepest truths. Here from the time of Buddha and Mahavir truths of the highest order have been popularised and nobody made a monopoly of them. The orthodox Brahmins might have been jealous against lower orders, but in spite of their exclusiveness, great heterodox teachers have broken through all artificial barriers and given the go-by to the caste privileges. Those who make too much of the caste-exclusiveness of the Brahmins should mix with the common people and then they will realise the greatness of the Hindu culture and the Hindu Sadhana.

In Europe, on the other hand, in spite of their religion of love, more hatred has been cultivated and on account of their pre-occupation with the struggle for existence and political freedom, they have got little rest hitherto to cultivate patiently the deeper truths of the soul. There is little chance for Europe to get that rest and leisure to cultivate the soul-powers properly. Their masses are now more busy with fighting for the betterment of their lot, and their ardent pursuits of comforts and conveniences for the body leave them little inclination for anything else. Their standards of comfort are expensive and exacting. We are blindly imitating them to our great detriment and loss.

The modern education that is spreading throughout the world and with which we aspire to attain equality with Europe and become a nation among the nations will rob us of our souls and make us more anxious for the comforts of the body than for enlightenment of the soul. We are becoming, like other people, more passionate than reasonable. Reason, though much talked of, is not really cultivated. Reason is not a faculty of the animal mind, but has a higher source, but our modern education that does not teach us to open our soul to the higher source of enlightenment, cannot create and develop the power of right reasoning. Passions are masquerading as reason. European logic differs from our logic. Our logic is unknown to the educated people now and hence there is no chance of our acquiring the right kind of reasoning power. Faith is not opposed to right reason, but is supported by it. We are being imbued with the European attitude of reason which is sceptical, and so is opposed to faith.

Semitic religions have failed to harmonise religion with reasoning and hence are dogmatic and fanatic. They are intolerant of the faiths of other people and will therefore cease to appeal to the future humanity. In future faith must be agreeable to reasoning, as history proves that man is becoming more reasonable in all that concerns him, and religion cannot be an exception to it. Man is a born philosopher and the education that he will get in future will make him

more rational. Unless man's education helps his soul, but is meant for the good of the body alone, that education will have to be so organised and reformed as to be able to help man in his endeavours for the culture of his soul. Now-a-days universities do not care for man's soul so much as for the body, and therefore the results have been that the education given does not produce real enlightenment. Educated people are as greedy and passionate as the ignorant masses and even more anxious for the animal part of a man. The socialistic and other similar movements that tend towards equality among all men may produce healthy effects and put a curb on the greed of individuals under religious ideals. The vanity of dying rich and making a display of unnecessary articles of luxury and enjoyment will be checked by law. Religion did this in the past in India. Law will do it in future.

CHAPTER XVII.

The relation between Man and Nature.

Among the Greeks some philosophers ascribed the creation to fire as the one elemental source, others to water, others to other things. Pythagoras attributed the creation to harmony. Plato, no doubt, who represents the sum total of philosophising among the Greeks, posits a divine origin of the things of the universe, which he considers as an imperfect copy of the perfect type or archetype existing in the divine mind. The Hebraic culture and thought system that have largely moulded the European civilisation and thought ascribes, as we see in the *Book of Genesis*, the creation to divine will and the creative power of God. But the Genesis seems to indicate matter as existing in a formless state in Chaos out of which God evolved the Cosmos, bringing out order out of disorder. Thus matter also existed from eternity and God brings his creative energy to bear upon it.

This line of thought that matter in itself is inert and lifeless and cannot by itself evolve life seems to correspond to our Sankhya system of philosophy in which both Nature or Prakriti and the Purusha or the spirit are considered as co-eternal. The Gita echoes this conception thus:

प्रकृतिं पुण्यञ्चैव बिद्धि यमादी उभावपि ।

विकाराश्च गुणाश्चैव बिद्धि प्रकृतिसम्भवात् ॥

"Nature and Purusha, both are beginningless, the modifications or things and their attributes are all derived from Nature." And, again, the creation is ascribed to the union of the Prakriti and the Purusha, the active principle. "मयाप्रकृत्यैव प्रकृतिसूयते सत्त्वाच्चरं"

"Prakriti is the womb of nature impregnated by the influence of the Purusha." This duality, however, of the Sankhya gave way to the unity of the Vedanta which is the most acceptable form of philosophy that underlies the Hindu system of thought. In the Vedas themselves unity is the fundamental conception, because in the Vedas God is represented as having thought out the creation. He is represented as evolving the universe out of himself.

"एकोऽम बहुस्यामः सतपः भूतप्लव सतपस्तपसा सर्वमिदमसृजत"

"All these mean that he evolved the creation out of himself." This has made the Hindu pantheistic and he sees all things as existing in God and all things as symbols of God.

Unity has thus been the predominant note in the Hindu mode of thinking. The Sankhya duality and the Vedantic unity, however, are flourishing side by side in the Hindu system of thinking. Even among the masses both these systems are holding the ground. In the conception of the Hindu goddess Kali who is painted black and naked with the God Mahadeva lying under or supporting her, I think this duality of *Prakriti and Purusha* is symbolised, and at the

same time a clear unity is pointed out. The **Abyakta** or **Prakriti** is darkness and so is black. She is invested with darkness, but manifests herself as the creator and the destroyer and is constantly bringing forth creatures. Hence she is naked. She wears a garland of skulls round her neck, as she is destroying also, and she is supported by the **Purusha**. Thus her worshippers represent and realise the duality unified. This is the sublime conception underlying the symbol of **Kali**, **Karalbadani** or the destroyer. The worshippers of one God without a second do not require any symbol, as they try to realise Him in their spirit. The spiritual worship of one God as taught in the **Upanishads**, therefore, is more in agreement with the **Vedic** teachings in which the different gods are different phases of the same divinity. The worship of the various gods and the goddesses, called the attributes of God, therefore is in agreement with the dualistic conception, and this dualistic conception of matter and spirit appeals more to the common mind.

The Jewish system of thought that has moulded the religious life and thinking of Europe emphasises the duality of matter and spirit, as co-eternal and co-equal. Matter and spirit are parallel existences in popular European metaphysics and thought-system even now. The earnest pursuit of the kingdom of God by Jesus and its reality emphasised by him has reduced matter to unimportance for the religious people, but the reality of matter is being now emphasised

by science. Science is trying to prove the non-existence of spirit, and the all-in-allness of matter. For a few philosophers, however, this duality may not be a reality, but their unity or unity-in-difference has not influenced the popular mind of Europe or the Sadhana even of the religious. The Olympic gods were powerful and so is Jehovah, and the worship of power and the fear of hell is even now the main inspiration in popular religious thought. Sins and their punishment occupies a large space in this religion of power. The burden of sin, therefore, is a pressing trouble and whoever can give relief is welcome. A pardon-seller from Rome was thus a welcome visitor. As the conception of sin will disappear, the saviourship of Jesus will weaken and religion will be non-existent. The present enlightenment is killing the idea of sin and hence the idea of redeemership is becoming untenable.

The European conception of duality again has no bridge to connect the two *viz.*, matter and spirit. The gulf between matter and spirit is unbridgeable. European dualism does not lead us to any unity. If you want unity, you must give up the duality. The Hindu duality leads to a unity of Prakriti and Purusha, as indicated above. Even the life in the Prakriti comes from the Purusha. “जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु” (He is life in all creatures). This life of all creatures comes from the Purusha. In modern European conception, on the other hand, matter itself is active and

from matter alone life is coming out, say they. There is this materialistic monism prevailing very widely. They do not care for its metaphysical inconsistency, as matter cannot be posited without the mind. The sharp analysis between matter and spirit has not been synthesised by them. In the Indian system of thought in spite of all divisions and distinctions, there is a broad unity. All castes, for instance, are the different parts of the body of the Purusha, the Brahmins representing the mouth, the Kshatriya the arms, the Vaisya the thighs and the Sudra the feet. The synthesis in the Hindu mode of thinking is pervasive and underlies all analysis. The Gita says: "अयिस्सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सुत्रे मणिगणाः इव" (Every thing exists in me like the beads of a garland of which the thread I am).

The separation of matter and mind being thus completed in the west, they have become very careful observers of Nature and discovering her secrets, they have conquered her. Their descriptions of nature are very accurate and carefully written. They have not that reverence for her that we see in the east. In the east people even now worship the forces of nature as they recognise in nature something higher than dead matter. This is characterised and often condemned as pantheism by European writers. But it is not simply bending before a greater force or power. Those who call the worshippers of the goddess Kali simply the worshippers of force, do

it seems, injustice to them. To them Nature does not represent simply power or destructive capacity. She represents the benign aspects of nature. She is mother as well as the destroyer. Rather the European thinking understands only the power of nature which it curbs and regulates with the help of science and controls it. In spite of the wonders of nature, the wonders of science are more appreciated by people now. Here nature was called something wonderful. Hence the Gita says:

आश्चर्य्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेनं ।

आश्चर्य्यवत्त्वदति तथैव खान्यः ॥

(Some are struck with wonder at seeing it; others describe the universe as a wonder).

To the eastern mind nature is limitless and vast, in which the finite and the Infinite are commingled and inseparably woven. To the western mind nature exists in time and space and is measurable and quantifiable. Nature loses all her wonder in the estimation of science and is yielding her secrets to the scientist one after another. The westerner's power of analysis has stood him in very good stead and has made him the master of nature. But it may be doubted if this mastery will be able to give him the peace and happiness that the moral nature of man seeks. Before this analytical power was developed, the western poets also looked with wonder at nature and felt her charm and their power of minute observation made them great

votaries of the beauty of nature. The higher or spiritual imagination which refuses to be bound by time and space asserts itself in defiance of time and space and all sorts of calculation, and makes all men worshippers of nature. Hence Tennyson, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats and others are high priests of the wonder in nature. They are not dualists, but see one reality in all things. The scientific attitude, therefore, towards nature is analytical and tries to make her a handmaid of service to man. The poetic attitude is one of synthesis and reverence. The worship of nature is thus holding its ground in spite of the highest culture and scientific attitude of the day. Phenomena of nature, though accountable to a scientist, are still regarded by poets as manifestations of divine power and as unaccountable and as such fit to be wondered at and worshipped. The sun to an Indian eye is not a glowing mass of gas or a means of saving gas light or electric light, but an awful manifestation of divine power to be worshipped every morning. Similarly the sea, the river, the Aswathva tree are still worshipped by the common people in India. This attitude is due to the inherent belief that no material thing is simply dead matter, but it is a symbol of the spirit, and is supported and permeated by a spirit. The Vedantic philosopher may not behave in the same way with the ignorant masses, but the masses, somehow, hold the creed that nature exists in God and she is not apart from Him. Faith in

God is thus made varied and complex and endless sects are multiplying. The worshippers of one spirit attain simplicity and form creeds and define them, but the worshippers of nature cannot attain unity or bind themselves by creeds. European philosophers and theologians call this religion ethnic and pantheism and Christianity and Islam credal religions. The religion of India is not simply ethnic or the expression of racial peculiarities, but it is due to the peculiar metaphysics which considers the finite things as existing in the Infinite and the phenomena of nature as manifestations of the spirit, the basis of nature. The Indians, at the same time, know that God transcends nature. Though the phenomena of Nature are varied and variously worshipped, they are really the *lila* (play) of the same God. Whether they are benign or malign to man, they are, after all, the manifestations of the same power. The duality that troubles us is really the immanence in time and space, and when one rises above them, the duality ceases. The Hindu system does not deny the evil but rises above it and attains peace.

The western poets being inspired by the love of the beauty in nature and being closer observers of the facts of nature have been, from the earliest times, great admirers of the external charm of nature. The magic of the natural beauty appealed to the Greek mind which was a great admirer of the beauty of form. Other races also have developed the conception of beauty that is

inherent in the human mind after the models left by the Hellenic geniuses. The Teutonic mind is characterised by a spiritual love of nature and almost all English poets have felt the charm in the beauty of nature. They being a heroic race, the manifestations of force and power in nature have appealed to some. Byron's address to the sea and his description of the Alpine storm reveal him to be worshipper of *Shakti* or power. Poets like Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats have felt the unity underlying the diversity and by their poetical imagination exceeded, at times, the duality of ordinary man. Beauty and truth are coincident with them and they do not seem to be troubled by the dualistic conception of evil. Our eastern poets being obsessed by the spirit grew indifferent to the form of nature and hence in their attitude towards nature there is a sad lack of attention to the actualities of nature. They have written idealistic and unreal descriptions of nature, though sometimes they seem to have been realistic, *e.g.*, Kalidas in his "*Meghaduta*" or "*Kumarsambhavam*." It is not that they did not notice the aspects of nature, but they went inwards to her soul and tried to realise her soul more than her body, so to say. The practical and realistic attitude of the European mind made the Europeans careful observers of nature and led to their poetical realities and landscape-painting. The transcendent nature of their God, again, as opposed to the pantheistic attitude of the Hindus, has made them faithful students

of matter and the forms of matter. Their descriptive poetry, therefore, is more realistic; we shall see this clearly if we compare Thompson's "Seasons" with Kalidas' "Ritusamhara."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The feeling of Revenge.

Both the Greeks and the Romans are represented in their history as very cruel. The cruelties of Chengis Khan and Tamerlain were on grand scales and hence they acquired a notoriety in history, and Mughal cruelty and Turkish massacre of the Armenians in modern times are made much of by European historians. We may, however, cite from the histories of Greece and Rome fearful instances of cruelty. Once the civilised government of Athens ordered the massacre of all the citizens of Mytilene which was under the hegemony of Athens, but had rebelled during the Peloponnesian war. It was a universal practice with them to put the captives of war to death or to enslave them. Even women were no exceptions to this rule. The Roman general Sulla ordered the massacre of eight thousand Samnite prisoners in cold blood and they were all killed in one morning. He proscribed six thousand prominent citizens of the democratical party of Marius and these citizens were massacred deliberately and their property confiscated. His partisans had similarly been killed by Marius and their properties confiscated. During the civil war at Rome from 134 B. C. to 31 B. C. several thousands were similarly killed and their property looted by the opposite party. Germany

became depopulated during the Thirty Years War that was fought between the Catholics and the Protestants from 1618 to 1648.

. In more recent history the massacres of the Gerondists and French noblemen by the Committee of Public Safety in Revolutionary France need hardly be detailed (see Katellbey p. 79). The spirit of retaliation and revenge is encouraged by the Jewish examples and by the laws of Moses. The laws of the Anglo-Saxon people also followed this principle of retaliation. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, or life for life," are the provisions of these laws. The spirit of revenge, no doubt, is a principle followed everywhere, more or less. Even now a man is hanged for murder and every one thinks that this principle of revenge should be continued. Even up to 1829 even small thefts were punished with death in England. The sanctity of the human life has been taught by religious injunctions, but the principle of revenge is a sort of wild justice and is still followed in some cases.

Revenge is surely an effect of the cruelty inherent in human nature. Children are cruel by nature. We enjoyed cruelty in childhood and pelted frogs with brickbats, killed the Dhonra snake and so on. The Roman people witnessed slaves killing each other; bull-baiting and bear-baiting were popular amusements. Momsen, the famous historian, writing on the amusements of the Roman people of the Empire, says that this cruel amusement of the gladiatorial

fight demoralised them and made them sensual, because sensuality and cruelty often go together.

This feeling of revenge, therefore, operates very powerfully, unless checked by the higher sentiment of universal love. Education and moral training may effect some improvement in the nature of man, so as to enable him to restrain this tendency of taking revenge for wrongs done. Unfortunately, however, the theism of Jesus and that of religions influenced by the belief that God is revengeful against the sinner has done harm to human society. In Milton, we see this clearly in the punishment of the fallen angels. The rebellious angels and Satan are confined in Hell for eternity and they are to be punished there eternally. Even the scheme of expiation through the vicarious suffering of Jesus shows the same attitude, *viz.*, retaliation. Among the Jews there was a custom of offering a scape-goat to which the sins of man were imputed and the man offering the goat was exiated. Milton in his "Paradise Lost," Bk. XII lines "285-296," justifies the sacrifice of Jesus as the more adequate method for purification than the Mosaic sacrifices of the blood of bulls and goats. In our Hindu conception a man suffers here in this life as well as in future births the consequences of his sins or good works, and by realising *Naiskarma* and acquiring *Jnan* is purified. The idea of revenge has deeply influenced European thinkers since the days of Homer. I shall just refer to certain incidents in Homer and the

Athenian dramatists Aeschylus and others to show how revenge has played an important part in their idea of justice.

When the Greeks destroyed Troy (the Romans also destroyed Carthage completely), they reduced the Trojan queens and princesses to slavery; Achilles dragged the body of Hector fastened to his chariot wheel. They captured the son of Hector, a boy merely, and crushed him to death by throwing him from above on the tomb of Achilles. The tragedies of the Greeks are mostly those of revenge. Clytemnestra, the wife of Agamemnon, kills her husband in revenge for the sacrifice of her daughter by Agamemnon at Aulis and Orestes kills his own mother in revenge for the death of his father. There are other instances of terrible revenge. In Sophocles' "Antigone" also there is revenge as the motive of the play. In Senecan tragedies that influenced the Elizabethan dramatists more than any other writer of antiquity, almost all of them have revenge as the main motive. A perusal of the Senecan tragedies will convince the student.

In the Elizabethan tragedies, and the greatness of the English drama is mainly in the Elizabethan tragedies, revenge figures as the most prominent feature in the predecessors of Shakespeare. Kid may be named as the writer of a Tragedy of Blood, viz., "The Spanish Tragedy" and it is this tragedy that set the fashion, and all the three dramas of Marlowe,

"Faustus", "Tamberlain" and "Edward II" exhibit the operation of this law of revenge. God takes revenge on Satan or the Devil by confining him in hell and Satan takes revenge on God by tempting human beings. Dr. Faustus, the hero, a scholar, enters into a league with the Devil for enjoying all pleasures for twenty-four years and then Satan comes and kills him to drag him to hell. In "*Edward II*" the queen takes revenge on Edward II. In "Tamberlain" also, though it is a tragedy of ambition, revenge plays an important part. Shakespearean tragedies, also, such as "*Richard III*," "*Hamlet*," "*Macbeth*," "*Othello*" etc. are tragedies in which great crimes are the subject matters, and every crime provokes revenge. In Webster's and Turneur's tragedies, which are called "tragedies of blood" revenge is a prominent feature.

Every crime provokes retaliation and all tragedies deal with some crime or other and thus revenge has to be introduced. In "*Titus Andronicus*" "*Yorkshire Tragedy*" and "*Ferrex and Porrex*" which are pre-Shakespearean tragedies revenge plays a prominent part, and they clearly indicate the tendency which all the subsequent tragedies followed.

Thus European history, Christian theism, European epics, dramas and most of the novels also will be found to involve the idea of revenge as a punishment for the crimes introduced. Though Jesus exhorts his disciples to pardon the trespasses of others "seventy times seven"

and the parable of the Prodigal Son emphasises God's love for the sinner, yet European literature has not been much influenced by this teaching.

The Hindu alone recognises the same human nature in all and in spite of the caste and the untouchability, the Hindu attitude towards the brother man is more tolerant and charitable. It is the monistic metaphysics, which teaches the existence of the same God in all, that has made the Hindu catholic. European metaphysics, or the metaphysics of the Jews is still dualistic and creates unbridgeable gulfs between man and man. This metaphysics does not encourage pardon, forgiveness and love. You may love another, if you recognise the same soul in him, otherwise not. Even Jesus was not free from the prejudice of the Jews against the Samaritans. He meant his teachings mainly for the Jews. It was St. Paul, who, influenced by Platonic Philosophy and perhaps by the teachings of eastern teachers, who carried the message of Buddha to those parts, preached the gospels among the Gentiles. Christ's best disciple Peter was against preaching the religion of Christ among the non-Jews. The villains of our Purans, such as, Hiranya Kashipu and others are delivered by the Incarnations against whom they fight.

Sri Krishna is represented as ready to pardon ninety-nine offences of Sisupala against him and when the latter completes one hundred crimes against Sri Krishna, he kills him. Revenge has a place in human nature, but in our Sastras it is

considered as the sign of *Rajoguna* (characteristic of men of passions). Jesus advises his disciples to turn the other cheek to the assailant, when they are smitten on the right cheek, but has his teaching been followed in European history? In our Sastra one will see that the Rishis almost always changed their curses into boons. The worst offence of Indra was pardoned by Gautama and the curse transformed into a boon. The Hindu tendency to forgive is illustrated by a couplet that my grandmother used to recite:—
 कमा आदि, कमा मूल कमा राखे जाति कुल । “Forgiveness is the beginning; forgiveness is the main thing: forgiveness will save your caste and family distinction.” The Hindus were not revengeful. They are not so even now. The followers of Semitic religions are revengeful and intolerant, as their religion teaches them that others are followers of falsehood and followers of falsehoods have to be persecuted.

CHAPTER XIX.

European Comedies and Satires.

The strong ethical note that has been developed in the European thought-system based on the duality of evil and good has tended beautifully to the production of comedies and satires. When a humorous person looks at the incongruities and inconsistencies of human conduct, he laughs at them, because such inconsistencies he considers as below the correct standard. A man of harsh and highly moral attitude feels an indignation at them and whips and lashes them to rectify men. When a nation is prosperous and happy, such inconsistencies excite laughter, rather than resentment. Certain amount of culture and refinement must be fashionable, so that every man and woman of the decent and refined classes may be expected to conform to the ethical standard, and if anybody falls below that orthodox standard, he is laughed at. Thus comedy flourishes in a civilised community, when it is happy and prosperous.

When the inconsistencies, crimes and greeds of a large part of men and women are glaringly unreasonable and immoral and the culture is of a high order, then some teachers of men, noting the demoralisation, feel sorry and bitterly resent such unworthy conduct. They then begin to satirise the immoralities and vices of the classes

from whom better things might be expected. It may be a fact that the same writer may sometimes laugh good-naturedly at the folly of man, and in a different mood expose and lash these acts of folly. The object of both classes of writers is ultimately the same, *viz.*, purification of human society and improvement of men's dealings with one another. Men, who are strongly ethical and puritanical in their attitude, are more satirical and ironical, but men who are good-natured and kind-hearted and yet feel the need of improvement of morals, write comedies to laugh at certain conduct, specially, if such conduct be novel and heterodox.

Generally, men of superior genius whose visions of human nature are more comprehensive and deeper and who see more of the beauty and grandeur of human sentiments, do not feel so much annoyed at the folly and irregularity of men. They make it their business to paint the beauty and the greatness of the human soul and destiny and are not satirically inclined. Their view of things being wider and fuller, as for example, Shakespeare's, they feel a little unhappiness at the smallness of man and placing the smallness and the greatness side by side create what is called humour. Humour, in the true sense, is the vision of the smallness of things within the limits of time and space, and of the greatness of the truths that are the basis of human life, but are above and beyond the limitations of time and place. Shakespeare's humour

as exhibited in "Hamlet," for instance, is presented in the contrast between the philosophy of perfect morality and justice as indicated in Hamlet's soliloquy and the baseness and the smallness of the court of Denmark. This is humour. Bankim Chandra's humour is indicated in the cross-examination of Kamalakanta, who is in grasp of absolute truth as contrasted with the small things of this mundane sphere in which he is involved.

Comedy, satire and humour are all connected things. It often depends on the temperament and the vision of the author. In the ages of great moral degeneration, satirists flourish, just as patriotism does often under foreign domination. Those men are witty who are intelligent and possess a strong commonsense, but are a little light-hearted. They readily see the apparent inconsistencies between practice and profession, between the teaching and the life of the teacher and at once vent their laughter in suitable expressions to cause others to laugh. Witty men are funny. They are conscious of the errors in human conduct but are not annoyed so much at it. They present the superficial view of things. Wit often indulges in funny words and frolicsome figures, such as puns and alliterations to catch the attention of others.

Great men, realising more the essential truths of human conduct, do not feel inclined to indulge in laughter; they are often pained and indulge in irony and sarcasm. Some of them, at times,

try to make the masses laugh at folly for the purpose of purifying the social atmosphere. Addison was a satirist of this mild type.

Among the Greeks, what is called the Old Comedy dealt with political infidelity and corruptions of the time of Pericles and Socrates. Aristophanes, the greatest Greek comedian, ridiculed and laughed at the party politics of Athens of the fifth century before Christ and exposed the demagogues. Aristophanes did not spare even Socrates, as he was an innovator in morals and religion. But when Athens lost her independence and came under the hegemony of Macedon, to handle and ridicule politics became a risky affair and hence the comedies of the third century before Christ dealt more with social irregularities, and the deviations from national customs and orthodoxy became the butt of ridicule at the hands of comedians. These are known as the "comedies of manners". At this time there was a promiscuous population living at Athens and a corruption of manners took place. Hence it became necessary to ridicule the innovations. Among the Romans, who were a strictly honest and sober nation in the early stages of their history, a change began when they conquered other nations and became rich and pleasure-loving. Their simple religious faith and pure domestic morality lost their purity. Roman sons had been very obedient to the *paterfamilias* or the head of the family and no son had dared to disobey the father. But

now this unquestioned authority of the father was denied, specially by the sons of rich men. These scions of noble families began to make runaway marriages and commit other social irregularities. Plautus and Terence, therefore, generally deal, in their comedies, with this topic of filial disobedience and the social corruptions of the Romans. It was a matter of laughter. But when in the first century B. C. and A. D. the Roman manners became more corrupt and vices multiplied, on the one hand, and the ethical standard of the stoic teachers became more exacting and the Romans were more cultured and enlightened, there flourished some great writers who satirised the vices and immoralities. Juvenal and Horace were great satirists. People became enlightened but more pleasure-loving and dishonest. Hence it was necessary for the teachers to lash the vices. Similarly, in England and France, also, when both the communities were advanced, in the seventeenth century, in culture, and consequently had knowledge of high ethical and religious principles and yet the people were really more immoral than before, a number of satirists flourished along with the great comedians. In the English community during Charles II's (1660-1684) and James II's (1684-1688) reigns, there was a great degeneration going on and vices became fashionable. Conjugal infidelity became the fashion, and morality became an object of contempt. It was this atmosphere that produced several comic

writers, who themselves were corrupt and yet knew what the correct life should be. They wrote comedies in which pictures of the contemporary manners and morals are vividly painted. They were followed in the eighteenth century by some great moral teachers, among whom Addison, Pope, Swift and Dr. Johnson may be specially named. Swift has been attacked for his virulent satires, but he has been defended by others as a man who felt strongly and therefore wrote strongly against the injustices and corruptions of the people who ought to have acted better. The eighteenth century was a time when people began to apply reason to almost all departments of the human life and therefore they blamed very strongly the deviations from the path of righteousness. The "Letters of Junius," written on the corruptions of the court and of the political circles of England, were so severe a condemnation of the upper classes that the supposed author, Philip Francis, was banished to India, where he befriended the people of India and opposed the acts of injustice done by the Governor General, Warren Hastings.

It may be noted that almost all great writers in English, whether poets, historians, novelists or biographers have a tendency to satirise vices and sins and this makes them great teachers of morality. This moral severity is absent from French writers like Moliere and so they have written better comedies but the

English are better satirists. Swift is a more powerful teacher than Voltaire of moral truths. True comedy, according to some, must not have any didactic purpose in view. It must be simply an innocent laughter and not ironical. The inconsistencies that one will laugh at must be due to foolishness or inability to understand what is sober and reasonable. Just as children laugh at things strange and do not care for any morality or correct rule of conduct, similarly, when an incongruous but harmless incident happens, we shall laugh. We laugh, in this way, at the behaviour of the clown or that of the fool in the theatre, but this is superficial and may fail to cause mirth in a sober man. Mere wit may find expression in many situations. According to some critics, Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor" is a pure comedy or "the Comedy of Errors" a comedy of mere intrigues. But certain characters themselves are comic, such as Falstaff or Malvolio and they excite laughter in all situations. Such comic characters are distinguished by a folly, which may be laughable or pitiable according to the temperament of the onlooker. Man being a moral being, whose conduct under all circumstances must be ethically correct, we cannot laugh at it simply as children do at an awkward thing. Even fools in the English dramas mix up their folly with a good deal of wisdom, as uniform folly cannot please us for a long time. The above-mentioned ethical view of comedy or the view that we can innocently

laugh at certain things like children without caring for any moral or ethical conduct in our fellowmen, seems to us to be a slightly superficial view of human nature. Man is not only ethical or inclined to the ways that are good; but also he is a child of joy. His soul is a thing that is not bound by the limitations of time and space and as such as he is capable of a joy that is above the limitations and defects inherent in finite things. When he laughs at certain things, he is really above the limitations of incongruities and judges them from that absolute stand-point. He is in touch with perfect knowledge, whose influence he feels when he laughs at folly. We as children of One who knows all things and whose knowledge is perfect cannot but feel a joy at the freedom which we enjoy above the finite things. All our laughter is really an expression of that joy in which our soul abides and therefore writers who can create situations to enable us to enjoy that joy and put us in touch with that happiness, may be accepted as creators of joy. Goldsmith creates that joy by his presentation of the Good-natured Man in his comedy of that name. He gives a similar joy of a higher kind in his "She Stoops to Conquer." In the last act of his "Merchant of Venice," Shakespeare creates a joy for us by the goodness of Antonio and by the intrigues involved in the episode of the rings. In some other comedies also of Shakespeare, there is some enjoyment of this higher kind of joy. Even in tragedies there is

this joy felt and Shelley expresses it in his lines thus:—"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts." Laughter is a privilege of man that marks him out from other animals and this is really an expression of his joyous nature, which is a spiritual privilege. When literature can create such pure joy for us, so as to make us forget the troubles of life, we feel satisfied. Pure comedy, therefore, is a thing that we seek for ourselves.

CHAPTER XX.

Pursuit of Knowledge.

Education and the cultivation of the art of elocution and rhetoric were sought in ancient Greece for political purposes. In the Middle Ages education and knowledge of Christian theology were meant for the priestly office. Since the Reformation in the fifteenth century, education was sought for religious life, though even Luther was not much in favour of high culture. Moderate reformers, such as, Sir Thomas More, Erasmus and other scholarly men were in favour of enlightenment for the purpose of all-round reforms of human society. They did not countenance revolution. In England the protestants and the puritans and other heretical sects were in favour of enlightenment. They were anxious to learn to read religious books and hence a tinker Bunyan came forward as the writer of a book which is most popular even to-day, next to the Bible, *viz.*, "The Pilgrim's Progress." Similarly the Vaisnava movement of Chaitanya created our Bengali literature. From the seventeenth century in Europe people's idea of enlightenment became widened. The Royal Society of England was founded in 1662. This shows that the rational movement inaugurated by the Reformation of Luther gradually led unto a wider enlightenment of Europe. So

Bacon and others advocated the pursuit of science. It was people like Bacon, Descartes and Montaigne who began to enlighten the elite classes. Thus religion supplied the first incentive for the pursuit of knowledge. Then came the enlightening movement of the eighteenth century. It was a tremendously enlightening age. Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu and the Encyclopaedists began to reason about everything and demolish all sorts of wrong beliefs and assumptions. Illumination became the watchword and motto of all thinkers. Gradually popular education and enlightenment began to be insisted upon for political, social and other progressive purposes. During the nineteenth century laws were passed for the education of the masses. In Austria even in the 18th century compulsory primary education was inaugurated by King Joseph II (1780-1790), though he was considered to be an unpractical reformer. In England a law was passed for popular education in 1834, yet much remained to be done. So Gladstone once said, "Let us educate our masters" *i.e.* the voters of England.

Thus Europe began a rationalising movement with the Reformation, four hundred years ago, that has made her more advanced than our country in scientific pursuit. Europe is now more for science and practical education. Her literature reflects this practical attitude of mind. Democracy requires popular education. Modern arts and industries also require practical training

in the sciences. Europe has become thus more efficient than Asiatic people. Efficiency or capacity for doing the works of life is the essential thing. Our modern education was introduced mainly for turning out clerks for the offices of the British rulers. Hence it is not so scientific or practical as it ought to have been, according to the requirements of the modern times.

In Europe even now one cannot say that philosophy is pursued for the good of the soul. It is more or less a merely academical pursuit. In our country philosophy was the basis of religion and philosophical systems were discovered for practice or for *sadhana*. We have just begun the pursuit of science, but have not attained much result. Sufficient money is not spent for scientific investigation; nor very earnest efforts are made to make life happy. We repeat the Baconian formula, "Knowledge is power," but do not practically follow it in our pursuit of knowledge.

In the history of European philosophy, poetry or other branches of literature, or in history of the discoveries of scientific truths, one will not come across any classification of learning as "Para" and "Apara" i.e. superior or inferior. All knowledge pertaining to the mundane things including human life and soul is treated by European writers as belonging to the same category. In our country the Rishis drew a distinction between the knowledge of earthly things and the knowledge that leads to the realisation of

God. The knowledge of the former variety may enable one to know the laws of nature and of the human society, but will not be of much help beyond the limits of this life. Hence this sort of knowledge alone cannot be the pursuit of thoughtful people. Our Rishis were more anxious to acquire that knowledge which would enable them to realise God and distinguish between the eternal reality and the transient things of this life. They understood that *Apara Vidya* or knowledge of limited things might make one happy in the body, but would fail to give eternal peace by freeing man from the passions and desires. This attitude seems to have acted as a deterrent on their efforts for discovering the laws of nature. They did carry on certain investigation into nature, no doubt, but they were more anxious for meditation to realise the soul and its relation with the Over-soul. They knew that the knowledge of the realm of nature would make them vain, arrogant and haughty like the *Ashuras* or the *Daityas*.

European religious teachers, specially Christian devotees, also, have taken the same view as our Rishis and have condemned the knowledge of lower kind. Marlowe has used the legend of Dr. Faustus and shown how the knowledge of sciences makes a man proud and materialistic and fond of the pleasures of the senses. Goethe also has used the same legend to illustrate the value of all cultures including the Hellenic culture and pointed out that the greatest

thing is Bhakti or love of God. All great Christian teachers have condemned knowledge, when it makes man arrogant and proud, and a denier of God. Scientists and philosophers, who, in the same way, deny God, approach Faust. Browning also in his "Sordello" and "Paracelsus" points out the same tragedy to which man is led by mere knowledge *i.e.* by the knowledge that creates a tendency against Bhakti or love of God and man. Such knowledge is condemned by our Vaisnavas also. All religious teachers will look down upon such knowledge, if it teaches us to deny God.

My idea is that European Sadhaks or religious teachers did not know what Para Vidya was *i.e.*, the science that enables one to realise the soul, and followed simply the path of Bhakti or belief in an incarnation (Jesus), and so they condemned the pursuit of knowledge. Hence one will find even till very recent times sons of knights and noblemen as not very anxious for liberal education. Such education was left to the sons of poor people who received education to be appointed priests and thus to acquire some social prestige. People of the aristocratic classes would rather neglect such literary education and were satisfied with a military training. Our military classes were, on the contrary, very great teachers of the Upanishads. Sri Krishna was the greatest Acharya and delivered the Gita, as the tradition says. Raja Janak of Mithila and Ajatashatru of Benares were great authorities on

the teachings of the Upanishads. Here the pursuit of knowledge was considered as the supreme duty in life as salvation was attainable by knowledge or *Jnan*.

European conception of knowledge being thus a narrow one, its pursuit was not so earnest. For poets and artists, therefore, the pursuit of Bhakti or the love of God is the highest ideal. Their conception of salvation also seems to be narrow and technical. A man is saved by believing in Jesus as the saviour. Heaven and Hell seem to most people to be two localities, just as our Golaka or Vaikuntha are. Even the greatest teachers can hardly rise above that popular view. Dante in his "Divine Comedy" creates Heaven, Hell and Purgatory as three regions. No doubt wiser people know these to be symbolic like allegories; yet few can rise to the conception of New Jerusalem as existing here and now. In the Indian thought system, however, such crude ideas do not figure much, though various Naraks or hells are described in the Purans and epics, such as the Mahabharata. Our Rishis knew that God was within their soul and that was the heaven they cared for. Every moment we are to create a heaven for ourselves. Milton, no doubt, knew this and hence puts into the mouth of Satan the following sentiment: "The mind is its own place and in itself Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven" (P. L. Bk. I.) Yet Milton has a geography of Heaven and Hell, and ordinary readers have to

be helped with a picture of Milton's cosmography for the purpose of understanding "Paradise Lost."

The inferior kind of knowledge or *Apara Vidya*, instead of helping us to know our real self, makes us more anxious to know this world and our life in it. It multiplies desires and wants and gives us that power by which we can control nature. Science has given us command over nature and created various comforts for us. We are forging various weapons for destroying each other and endangering human civilisation and culture. The education that we are receiving during the last hundred years has made our desires very clamant and has multiplied them. This sort of knowledge increases what is called the *Rajoguna* (desires, passions, etc.), and weakens the higher tendencies of the soul, which are called *Sattwa Guna*, *i.e.*, tendencies that are in favour of higher ethical and spiritual aspirations. *Rajas* will increase your desires and attachments, but *Sattaw* will make you fond of knowledge and make you a giver of light to others. It will make you a benefactor to the universe and a source of the highest kind of happiness to others. Educated people are now characterised by self-praise, egotism and other qualities which enable them to lord it over others. They do not care for humility, love of God and other serviceable attributes.

Appendix

Soliloquies occupy an important place, specially in the Elizabethan tragedy. It is, therefore, necessary to understand, if they are indispensable as a dramatic device and what their significance and psychological importance is. We do not find any soliloquy in the dramas of the Greek tragedians, Aeschylus and Sophocles or Euripides. It is first employed by the Latin tragedian, Seneca, who also does not use it for the purpose in which Shakespeare and his contemporaries have used it. In the Shakespearean use, it is a key to the motive and deeplying thoughts of his heroes and *dramatis personae*.

In the Greek tragedians, where the fables are all mythological and well-known to the audience, the dramatic surprises are not so surprising, the appeal always lying to the religious and other higher emotions of the people, who did not care so much for the intellectual gratification of witnessing unexpected turns in the incidents of the story. Often the same tragic stories have been dealt with by the dramatists, who have shown their ingenuity and invention by representing the main incidents in different settings. No doubt, vast differences have arisen from these settings and their emotional effects have been

heightened or lowered. Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides all have tragedies on the story of Electra, but their situations and settings differ and this has created a world of difference among their dramas. Critics who are competent to judge of these matters are of opinion that the dramas of Sophocles and Aeschylus are far superior to those of Euripides. Schlegel goes so far as to say that "Electra is perhaps the worst of Euripides' pieces. Was it the rage for novelty which led him into such faults? He is truly to be pitied for having been preceded in the treatment of the same subject by two such men as Sophocles and Aeschylus."

Though there be no soliloquy in Greek tragedies, in the sense in which the Elizabethan dramatists have employed it, yet in them we often see at the commencement of a play a single person or the hero or somebody else appearing to tell the audience as to what they are to expect, though like the narrator of the prologue, in a modern drama, they do not take the audience into their confidence always; for instance, in the "Libation-Bearers" of Aeschylus in which Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, has just arrived from banishment and murders his own mother, Clytemnestra, and her paramour in avengement of his father Agamemnon's death, at the hands of his guilty wife; Orestes himself appears, at first, to offer locks of his hair to the tomb of his father, for whom he thus mourns:—

" Once and again, I bid my father hear.
And these twin locks, from my head shorn
I bring,
And one to *Inachus* the river god,
My young life's nurturer, I dedicate,
And in sign of mourning unfulfilled
I lay, though late, on this my father's grave :
For O my father, not beside thy corse
Stood I to wail thy death, nor was my hand
Stretched out to bear them forth to burial."

(E. D. A. Morshed, M. A.)

Similarly, in "*Hecuba*" of Euripides, the ghost of Polydore, the youngest son of Priam and Hecuba, appears to tell us who he is and how he was murdered and also the whole history of the family of Priam, the king of Troy, after Troy had been sacked by the Greeks. He ends his speech with a very pathetic allusion to the sad lot of his mother, who is going away to Greece as a slave :

" O my wretched mother!
How art thou torn from princely roofs to view
This hour of servitude! What sad reverse
Of fortune! some malignant God hath
balanced
Thy present misery against thy former bliss."

(The Everyman's Library edition of the Plays of Euripides.)

In Greek tragedies the chorus, which has a very important function and which, perhaps, has

made their tragic effects so sublime, by its lyrical outpourings in the appeals made by it to the deepest and purest emotions of the audience, sometimes tells us the secrets of the hearts of the heroes or heroines or other dramatic characters and supplies us with the clues to the development of the story, which the soliloquy does in a modern drama.

In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, for example, we find that the chorus of the old men of Mycenae, who rejoice to hear from queen Clytemnestra that her husband Agamemnon is coming home as a victor from Troy, which has fallen, apprehends, as old men should do, that some evil may happen out of the wrath of the queen at the slaughter of her daughter, Iphigenia, at Aulis :

' At home there tarries like a lurking snake,
Biding its time, a wrath unreconciled,
A wily watcher, passionate to slake,
In blood, resentment for a murdered child.'

This practically bodes the tragedy that is going to happen. In *Macbeth*, we gather the murderous purpose of Lady Macbeth from her comments on the letter of Macbeth, in which he tells her of the partial fulfilment of the smaller prophecies of the witches and also of their greater prophecy. But the lofty role of the chorus in the Greek tragedy imparts a sublimity to the idea of the crime of the criminals, who are like playthings in the hands of Fate; whereas, the

whispers of the crimes of the modern criminals excites a feeling of horror in us. Macbeth, Richard III, Iago etc., criminals of the Elizabethan drama, are conscious and reasoning devils, but Orestes, Clytemnestra, Hecuba and other murderers of the classical tragedies, are under the spell of an irresistible destiny, which broods over their activities as an incubus and overbears every other force devised by human wisdom or foresight.

In Seneca, in the tragedy of "Mad Hercules," for the first time, we meet with the use of the word "Solus," along with the name Juno, the stepmother of Hercules, though her soliloquy is nothing but an introductory speech in which she states her motives for the tragedy that she is going to create, out of jealousy against her stepson, Hercules, whom she maddens and then induces him to slay his own wife and children. This speech we may compare with that of the ghost of Polydore in *Hecuba* of Euripides. The use of soliloquies that we meet with in the great Elizabethan dramatists had not developed in the tragedies of Greece or Rome. The Roman tragedies of Seneca had no independence, they being rather bad copies, more bloody, than the tragedies of Euripides, who seems to have exerted greater influence on Seneca.

The Greek tragedies were written under a sort of religious influence and their object was

to purify the human heart by exciting the feelings of pity and terror. In Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, one of the best of Greek tragedies, for example, there is no bloody incident, but a great pity is felt throughout. They constitute really a quite different species of literature from the tragedies of the Elizabethans. The crimes that constitute the theme of Greek tragedies are often like sacrifices meant to appease the wrath of the Gods. "The Furies" of Aeschylus depicts the expiation of the sin of *Orestes* for matricide. In the Epic Age, as presented by Homer, man was completely a plaything in the hands of the Gods. In the succeeding age of the dramatists, man had acquired more self-consciousness, and a sense of responsibility, yet it is only among philosophical people like Socrates, Plato and others that the Gods had ceased to be responsible for men's crimes. The common people were still fatalists and believing as they did in the reality of the Gods of Olympus, their spokesmen, the dramatists, still recognised the hand of the Gods in the affairs of men. Both Aeschylus and Sophocles were deeply religious and could not believe that man was an absolutely free moral agent, though they knew that man could avoid the wrong path, if he happened to be good. Are not some modern philosophers as yet necessitarians without belief in the perfect freedom of man as a moral agent? The criminals of modern tragedies are extremely self-conscious, shrewd and clever people and extremely hypocritical. Iago,

Richard III, Macbeth, are unsurpassable for their great power of intelligence in hiding their motives, and so to understand them fully, they are made to hint their motives in their loud thoughts or "Soliloquies" and "Asides." They are all Machiavellian in their unscrupulousness. Hamlet, not a criminal of the type of Richard III, or Iago, has to avenge the murder of his father, which he could not do openly. He is overburdened with the thoughts of the pros and cons of the step that he considers to be his duty. If we compare him with Orestes, we at once, see the difference between the motives and methods of the two noble-minded young men, both bent on avenging the murders of their fathers. Orestes acts under the promptings of Apollo, Hamlet under the promptings of his father's ghost. But Hamlet belongs to an age in which people mostly did not believe in the communication between the dead and the living, and hence Hamlet lets us know his difficulties in his famous soliloquies. He has no clear command either from Apollo or his conscience. His faith in future life and other problems which an educated man seeks to solve ever pulls him backward and forward and paralyses his efforts. His mind is a playground, not for the gods, but of the diverse reasons that trouble a thoughtful man, for whom every question is a dilemma and every step is a thorny path.

As we go through the dramas, specially the tragedies, of the great Elizabethans, we feel that the soliloquy is a very useful device at the hands of these dramatists, whereby they manage to introduce some light into the dark chambers of the heart of their consummate villains or villainous heroes without which it would be very difficult for the reader to gauge their motives, and appreciate their activities. Some of the crimes are so unique and out of the way that unless the criminal lets us know it by his own words, it will hardly be possible for us to guess what he is driving at and why he is so unnaturally wicked. In the *Atheist's Tragedy* of Turneur, for instance, in which D' Amville who gets his nephew banished into the war and then spreads a false report of his death, gets his elder brother murdered by his own agent for his property and then wishes to force his own daughter-in-law to an incestuous connection with himself, tells us in a soliloquy why he has been so wicked :

“ Let me call my projects to account
 For what effect and end have I engaged
 Myself in all this blood? To leave a state
 To the *succession of my proper blood*.
 But how shall that succession be continued?
 Not in my elder son, I fear. Disease
 And weakness have disabled him for issue,
 For the other—his loose humour will endure
 No bond of marriage. And I doubt his life,
 His spirit is so boldly dangerous,

O pity that the profitable end
 Of such a prosperous murder should be lost!
 Nature forbid! I have a body
 That will not suffer me to lose my labour
 For want of issue yet."

He has got his banished nephew's intended bride married to his own son, but that boy is impotent. His second son is too wild to marry and produce a successor. So he thinks of compelling his own daughter-in-law to an immoral connection with himself, so that his ill-got property from his murdered brother may continue in his own family! We have not read elsewhere of such a crime! In the soliloquy uttered by D'Amville we come to know it. Richard III, another great criminal, who has been hitherto known as a good brother of Edward IV and an earnest fighter, on the side of the Yorkist party, lets us know the reasons, at the very opening of the play, why he determines to be a villain. What a defiant and selfconscious villain he is? He seems to surpass even Satan in his firmness in the rebellion against all moral law and order:

"I am determined to prove a villain
 And hate the idle pleasures of these days,
 Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
 By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,
 To set my brother Clarence and the king
 In deadly hate one against the other."

But for the frank declarations of his methods and motives, it would be difficult for us to follow his subsequent machinations and crimes. Macbeth also enables us to understand in his 'asides' and soliloquies how he comes to form the idea of murdering Duncan. Generally the motives of good men are easily intelligible and they need not hide them from the public. They need not hypocritically misrepresent them. One may guess what they aim at from the antecedents of their lives. They do not follow any unnatural procedure, but if they do anything apparently unaccountable, they may be represented as justifying themselves; for example, Prospero, who raises the tempest and gets his brother and others drowned, says in explanation of his conduct:—

I have bedimm'd

The noontide sun, call'd forth multitudinous winds

And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire and rifted Jove's stout oak.

But this rough magic

I here conjure, and, when I have required
Some heavenly music which even now I do,
To work their end upon their senses as that

This airy charm is for."

He has used rather a rough method to make his brother repentant and to bring about the union between his daughter and Ferdinand, and he now makes amends for this harshness by providing unearthly music for them. If such a drama

were written by a Greek dramatist, perhaps, he would have put this explanation into the mouth of the chorus, who would have moralised further on the iniquity of Prospero's brother and the the wrong done by him.

